

o·blēk

WRITING
FROM THE
NEW
COAST

PRESENTATION

o·blēk

¹²**oblique** (*o•blēk*) Also: obliquity (*ō•bli•kwīti*) [ad. L. *obliquitāt-em*, n. of quality] **1.** *fig.* Divergence from moral rectitude, sound thinking, or right practice; moral or mental perversity or aberration; an instance of this, a delinquency, a fault, an error. *c* **1422** HOC-CLEVE *Jonathas* Moral, By the ryng bat is rownd We shul vndirstande feith which is rownd withouten obliquitee or crookednesse. **1551** CRANMER *Answ. Gardiner* Your book is so full of crafts, sleights, shifts, obliquities, and manifest untruths. **1627** DONNE *Serm.* xxviii. 283 The perversnesse and obliquity of my will. **2.** Deviation from any rule of order. *rare.*

o·blēk/12

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**EDITED BY
PETER GIZZI AND CONNELL MCGRATH**

o·blēk editions

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CONNELL McGRATH

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FOREWORD

We are the generation of artists that grew up with a photograph of the earth tacked to our walls. When that first image of the earth was sent back in 1959 our conception of this place was changed materially. No longer was it to be a world so defined by our ancestors; in that swift shutter and instant transmission it became *worlds*, *peoples*, and *languages*. All boundaries or clear definitions of identity are eroded, active and blurred. Simone Weil said "You could not be born at a better period than the present, when we have lost everything." We live in this space of multiplicity where the ability to construct a single world with shared aspirations, sensibilities and imagination is not only improbable but impossible. Yet it is poetry's function to aspire to the impossible, because poetry works through a human agency – the generosity of a reader and a writer. Poetry demands that a risk be taken, and from this act of intelligence courage claims precedence over poverty of spirit.

George Oppen wrote in *Of Being Numerous*:

How shall one know a generation, a new generation?
Not by the dew on them! Where the earth is most torn
And the wounds untended and the voices confused,
There is the head of the moving column

Who if they cannot find
Their generation
Wither in the infirmaries

And supply depots, supplying
Irrelevant objects.

We stand on provisional shores, and point into enormous reconstructions of times and places. The new coast is the curve of an earth as witnessed from elsewhere.

This is not an anthology but the result of six months' work. It is provisional in that there are many other young poets working equally hard and demanding

to be read. It is a difficult task to “know” everyone out there and harder still to include them all. This issue is the result of poets who responded to a call for work and others who sent it on unsolicited; the goal was simply to produce a double issue exclusively for younger and emerging poets.

It is important to note that to make such distinctions of generation has its drawbacks, as it has always been my belief that artists work in time and speak across continents and centuries, communicating with, and talking through, both the living and the dead.

The adjoining volume *Writing from the New Coast: Technique* illuminates various approaches to the art; these statements of poetics expose a specific point in a process of *becoming*. The condition that they address is a state of *making*. It is hard enough to live. Louis Zukofsky said it best when asked the role of the poet; he replied “the role of the poet is to survive.” For this moment some voices have articulated that struggle — we need to hear them.



For my part, this double issue concludes my work as primary editor of *o•blēk*. Connell McGrath will become the sole editor with the next issue.

These past seven years have been my education, an experience as astonishing as it has been difficult. I am grateful to all who have come to participate with *o•blēk*, including the contributors, subscribers, funders, patrons, and especially the readers.

I thank everyone for their generosity.

Peter Gizzi

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PRESENTATION

JESSE ABBOT

SELF-PORTRAIT

derived from Indo-European roots
**seu* and (*pro-*) **tragh*

Drawing my own possessions forward
I get accustomed to inner gossip and its sibs
companion of secret along with secret,
certainty of trailing abstracts.
What traction exists in solitude . . .
I'm trawl net of basking and bustle both:
This swain has been dragging his custom and ethic
home for treatment. I'm sure of my herd
of boars, my sounder, and still there is
a trail of sedition. The swamis within
are intractable

ASH WEDNESDAY GHATAKA¹

Did not consider it Christian brightness
(seminal clarity in dark brow-founded);
thought many I saw converted. Or classy.
A cause to convert a loan to grant:
indebted to hungry trees I waver;
even the ashes I picked to pose
my question to mattered momentarily as
constituent parts. I matchmaker will
endure to begin where the seasons left off.
No apparent flowers, but the fire in fruit
brings my lineage to curious readiness, skill

of the waterjar clock to this Bedside Lent.

¹Skt. Accomplishing; forming a constituent part; genealogist; matchmaker; tree that produces fruits without any apparent flowers; readiness.

WILL ALEXANDER

THE MIME TORNADO

Whirling
in this burning circular aviary
in this greenish stellar intensity
greeting the fire of my own shadow
with its simultaneous spurs
erupting from linguistic ferret
from the black domesticity of arrogance
like a wind
absorbed in solar reptile signals
I greet its invincible ire
in the penetrating flux of its harried angular journey

it is a syllabus of glass & of ants
roving
like a living mutational turquoise
a lamp
an aperture of virescent proto-nomads
hurtling through rivers of swirling lunar hematopias
heated by blank Egyptian kindling moons

here I am on a raft
of instinctive gemstone tumbling
on a raft
of rainy black & red molten
calling on my shadow
with all the colour
emptied from its treasonous mime tornado
so that eternity ingests the force of blazing tourmaline invictas
invictas charged

with the stunning topology of ignition
with the empty transmigration bodies
taking on
the momentous characteristic of the transmundane specific
unravelling the basic tourniquets of hydrogen
as in the songs from bodiless sun bells

the black sun levels
where karmic stains are transmogrified
& the thoughts
merismatic
like the name of a cloud passing into anomalous writhing

my shadow
the occult
the runic enclave
over-arched like a beacon minus its wretched cyclical entrapment
a beacon in a floating citron grainery
burning from its ubiquitous orbicular fountain
from its ironic wellsprings of torment
its oasis of gases
incessant
mutagenic
heraldic
boiling

MARY ANGELINE

FROM *MY ITALIAN*

of my undertaking I would want a famous passage
from a perspective before Plato from olden times
to hold me that I will not waver or refer expressly
to superhuman events or simply crouch down low
among the rocks paws spread out before nose to
the wind and eye on the evil its inherited . . . I have
seen you before but what can I do elaborate some
trifle, correct the off hand friendship, rent a car
go to Tabriz, Tadmor or Tahiti and visit Brando or
submit to everything patiently eagerly with grace
like some King of Naples hovering around a small hard
seed so bewildered by your love

a semi perpendicular self
satisfied defense is the hardest
to draw

out all these other things
we had to worry spirit sand stone sleight of hand
into a base to avoid being tagged out

what she liked the most what she counted on to help
suspend her from the logic of moving through the world
included making this plan of taking it as a whole of
each of them shifting between the broader context
to trace contrasting suggestions on finer and finer
scales between a level of the every day or interesting
options of description of themselves to be known as
divided up dream and risky activities which demand
dedication to mankind not five mounds of sand and a
bucket of tears

by the definition adopted they would come to
have less and less to say to one another concerning
the techniques of principle or innovation as an
activity requiring explanatory levels which they
already contained within themselves and were not
alternatives to be adjusted to larger patterns but
to new openings if they decided to one block at a
time walk down that street together

the pretense folds
the moment of discovery neatly sets me free clear
view Era una bella giornata, il sole splendeva, gli
uccelli cantavano ed erano felici or so I remember
it to happen



Dream: two weeks into night we are at a table an
outdoor cafe he won't finish his food or is
being stubborn about something I want him to
eat the food. I know he is hungry. He is holding
his head and playacting. I feed him with my
fork until he has finished his plate.

from your lips all I said rocks on the bud
of valour
a song an epitaph
brute club on the architecture
attempts to visualize what everyone wants
maybe the heart knows nothing
how the heart missed what it knows
an easy trick of protection
ten coins tight

preparation as well as enthusiasm in order to
deal with robbers is the secret of all natural
and human law. Movement which meets with devotion.

they had hired helpers, did not swerve from their
course remained firm and the four seasons did not
abandon them they might want to say that heaven
and earth are by their sides and we would see it
and believe some thing great was possessed through
them though they would never say it to our faces
in those words to set armies marching

this strange strain of undergrowth keeps leaping
to the archetype all of everything he was my
bottomless pit fed to fullness where she rushes
in and takes or displayed little undulation



sometimes I feel my soul is so pliant it
leaves the world outside all yellow russet
black leather the clouds before a gale are
nothing to do with this disclosed far off
way to apply the charm so shiny it must have
used two distinct sources a uranian suddenness
an unplanned apostle an exquisite perfume
weighing the steps back to him?

charging out for the future was made silent
past tense six inch nail just barely touching
the cool ball

how he could move his ichor better than Twombly
into the hearts fist letter perfect or face
forward into the rocks without a scratch was
to call this romantic fair play it might be
easier to erase the wind

LORI BAKER

CURTAINS

1.

Shut tight, they protect us when the hallucinations of the season come tapping at our windowpanes.

2.

Despite a thorough vacuuming (applied by Madame equally to her conscience and to her living room), a single, sinuous gray hair, variety *felix catus*, clings to a roughhewn yellow drapery at 27, Rue Andre Breton, in Paris. Alas, poor Minouche . . .

3.

A draper's omen: the lovers embrace, but behind them, a gap opens up between two panels of a white embroidered curtain. Has a heart escaped out the window?

4.

"So? Let them look!" he cries, brandishing his open toolbox before the bare pane.

5.

In a chateau in the distant Burgundy, there is a luxurious suite completely lined with ancient tapestry curtains: one step before the hunter, the unfortunate hart languishes in maroon fields, longing for release. A rabbit looks on.

"No one," the proprietor assures Maria, "has ever drawn them all aside."

There are, he explains, hundreds of curtains, hundreds of hunters, hundreds of harts, in the gallery of rooms.

"But the view!"

Maria begins drawing aside the curtains, one by one; behind each, she finds a plaster wall, cracking, unpainted. Not a door, not a window.

In the hallway, the proprietor excuses his laugh like a sneeze.

"Pardon!"

6.

When the curtain rose for a second time, Mimi was gone; only her black silk glove remained, clinging to the curtain fringe, pelted with red roses, chocolate oranges, a wadded hanky, and our final, enthusiastic "Bravo!"

7.

"Forgive me Father for I have sinned, it has been seven . . . ten . . . no, fifteen years since my last confession."

He slams shut the grate, leaving you alone on your knees with the smell of musty velvet and the weight of his celestial rage. In the church beyond the drapery, someone breaks a rosary, and dozens of beads clatter like souls onto the cold tile floor.

8.

From the outside, looking in: on a table by the window, a lamp can be seen, shedding its honeyed light through a curtain woven in gold and black. Somewhere inside, a man is reading a newspaper. His wife is reading too, or rather perhaps staring absently at the book open upon her knee. A page turns; a phrase emerges into the night, and is lost in the dark autumn leaves.

9.

Curtain, n. 1. A piece of cloth or similar material hanging in a window or other opening as a decoration, shade, or screen.

2. *Theater*. A line, speech or situation in a play that occurs at the very end or just before the curtain falls. 3. The part of a

rampart or parapet connecting two bastions or gates. 4.

Architecture. An enclosing wall connecting two towers or similar structures. 5. Any barrier, such as a restriction on

communication. 6. *Plural. Slang*. Ruin, death; The end.

EDWARD BARRETT

ESSAYS FOR THE MOMENT

for Pierre Martory

1.

How they presented themselves, with such airs! You don't know anything if you don't know me, each of them seemed to say. So the bronze ladder, rungs burnished a pale beer color where other hands and feet had climbed, was put aside. No, you would never forget what was important, falling asleep on the dunce's stool, awakening to moonlight tracing chalk on the floor of the abandoned schoolroom.

2.

The equation may be a lot simpler than I thought. We'll let *object* stand for everything you can have temporarily (length of time not defined). "Person," therefore, is an object although we realize this term represents more than objects, but is an object too. For the moment we leave out everything else. *Waitress!* I know it's their job, but on a good night you'd think the restaurant staff had been invited and were happy to be there. The taxi ride later is a dream, too: no bullet-proof divider, so the driver can hear everything you're saying and – not in a pushy way – responds with something funny and you all laugh as the car next to you at the light looks in, the way you do at people in cabs.

3.

If I think of a child's beach pail (a blue one, with a frieze of red anchors around the middle) and fill it with sand and throw it in the ocean, it makes a satisfying p-l-lop sound as water shoots up around it like a cylinder. If I think of this pail, only empty it, then it makes a disappointing flat sound when it hits the sea, and floats on its side like a sailboat – given its size, a fairy-tale sailboat, the kind a mouse and a grasshopper would go away in. Gradually this image fades as the pail fills up with water and then drifts with either the narrow, bottom end just touching the surface, or the mouth end up, with the handle (a red one) folded over to one side. *Piece of junk* everyone thinks who sees it floating near them because there are certain things you don't want to be reminded of when you go to the beach: as the day wears on our merriment becomes more serious than this pail's crude essay on the color of

the ocean (an impossible blue), or this joke of a frieze, a child's mythology of friendly anchors floating through a series of repeated destinations. *Piece of junk, just like in the drugstore* where you buy these beach-pail sets, where all kinds of things are available without blending into a definable presence: hair-dyes, ice-cream sandwiches, and take-home tests; the pharmacist neither a doctor nor a salesman, a special class for which only the French have complete understanding.

4.

Yet, at least against this pale cheek, O metal god, thy titanium hands do not always brush soft. Like any couple, we've got to work something out. You don't want to see someone in despair, do you? Then what about getting away for a while? But we don't travel far before communication breaks down again, and each day's dawning is just some better technology for carrying your voice from even farther away. Nights are worse than the boxes new CD's come in: you need the jaws-of-life to open them too.

5.

You visit the colonial inn of your birthday and all the "atmosphere" vanishes: the smoky mirrors, the pleasant crush at the tavern's bar, platters of meat set out before the roisterers. The only one standing there out of costume is you, as you begin to attract attention and try to slow this process down because once the tavern's customers turn to look at you, they mysteriously disappear, leaving you standing in a re-creation of the same exact scene, only it's in a mall, a place you never wanted to go to, but now that you've been there a couple of times you're used to it — besides it's the kind of place you think you can stop going to without missing anything. "Spats" it's called and there's a fake musket hanging on one wall and huge copper pots on another. Some of the businessmen drink vodka gimlets, some are having Dewars on the rocks. The bartender feeds you a line then retreats into the darkness as if you were about to embark upon a set speech that has become famous and studied in all the schools because it is one of those statements of a grand theme that we will explore in the next few weeks and I don't think we will get any answers but we can ask a few questions that will make us think, and this is material you will have to know for the exam anyway. It's your birthday, so enjoy — only it's really the myth of Narcissus you are entering, a metamorphosis which is not the final one, only the next in a series of continually evolving scene changes mounted like a dream. The barroom goes dark; the actor is frozen, facing the audience. A single spot picks him out.

He speaks: "I see that my real business is elsewhere, right here beside me, and that I have been carrying around this weight of grief and joy like two gym bags with their shoulder straps dragging along the ground. I feel like I still have them, but with a good shrug I can balance them, so that I'm standing here with a firm grip on the handles, and there is this pleasant sensation of my arms being pulled straight down my sides. I know it'll change soon as I start walking — I'll have to move, you can't stand still in the middle of such a busy street without attracting attention — but this moment of reflection is enough to get me through the thoughtless, chafing hours I wear like a suit of toxic side-effects. I don't mind. But why the oppression of certain visitations, so that the whole day is like this: a sense of loss but without regret, just a question about what it means now that I'm feeling it — a presence, like the gun-metal disc of a storm moving up the coast, still many miles out to sea, coiled like an eye that is about to look at something, not just reflect the mantle of fallen leaves? I've got it and I want to keep it, so here, take it. It'll go anyway, and if I don't try to hold on to anything, I won't spoil it for the next time."

6.

Then all these periods held domain and, like disco, were swallowed in turn by the earth which had given them life. Even the house was infested and burned, shrieking, to the ground. Tender love, sings the serial killer during recreation-time at the state hospital, tender love is the glue that holds it all together, someone's favorite dog racing across the lawn, right into the horn-of-plenty's maw. So marks on the chalkboard began to crystallize on the floor of the ice arena. What will take contagion from our time? But there will always be queer, Scottish things (for example) that fascinate us with a sense of urgency. We know, and in this knowledge cannot keep the facts straight very long, which allows the *Nina*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa Maria* to slip through the maelstrom like upside-down hats pulled across on wires, pronouncing clarity on all who live here. There will come a time — but that isn't something we should talk about since everything will be different then. Something immortal is a good way to preserve your impressions, and desires, and everyone you love, to keep them out of harm's way, yet with the know-how and wherewithal to let them adapt to new things, so some kid doesn't shout, *hey Methuselah, nice donkey-cart*, when you drive up to the front of your house. No one expected it to last very long, but we're paying for it into the next century, now not too far away, coming towards us with its bagpipes and its kilt.

THOMAS BARRETT

THE EPISODE OF THE PENITENTS

Framing as a device for deceleration¹

regret

Stepping into the fashion picture in the early fifties
women's pants paraded under a variety of names²

11:19:47 AM

There is no warning³

I have a taste for even reading torn papers

lying in the streets⁴

Right: the couple in their living room beneath mahogany
shelves filled with American Arts and Crafts pottery
by Teco, Grueby and Newcombe.⁵

1 Megaton on the surface of Detroit—physical damage⁶

In *A Thousand and One Nights*, Scheherazade succeeds

in postponing her own execution by telling her tales⁷

11:50:30 AM

¹The type of storytelling where the principal characters tell their stories ad infinitum until the first story is completely forgotten.

²Capris, clamdiggers, pedal pushers, pirate, and houseboy pants, and the later stovepipes.

³The populations have not evacuated or sought shelter.

⁴Don Quixote

⁵Linda wears a gold silk boatneck sweater, about \$650, by Zoran. Jerry's cashmere cardigan by TSE Cashmere, about \$820.

⁶Figure 4 shows the metropolitan area of Detroit with Windsor, Canada across the river to the southeast and Lake St. Clair directly east. The detonation point selected is the intersection of I-75 and I-94, approximately at the civic center, and about 3 miles from the Detroit-Windsor tunnel entrance.

⁷Quite early in European literature emerged collections of short stories whose unity was achieved by having one story serve as a framing device.

These were clothes that managed to look both tailored
and feminine; tailored because they were made in crisp
fabrics: poplin, shantung and taffeta⁸

Circles are drawn at the 12-, 5-, 2-, and 1-psi limits⁹

We find ourselves among consequences whose causes are
unknown to us¹⁰

Bold geometric patterns, a favorite of the fifties,
give everything a sharper image¹¹

12:35:40 PM

Approximately 35 percent of the energy from a nuclear
explosion is an intense burst of thermal heat¹²

Freeing himself from the shepard's grip, Don Quixote launches
immediately upon a new adventure
without even bothering to wipe the blood from his face¹³

⁸Every piece was designed to make Hollywood stars look like happy, barefoot housewives. And vice-versa.

⁹Of the 70,000 people in this area during non-working hours, there will be virtually no survivors. (See table 4.)

¹⁰Thus does Don Quixote come upon Sancho in a mountain gorge.

¹¹Poolside glamour: an eye-grabbing harlequin print from 1955.

¹²The patient's skin is burned in a pattern corresponding to the dark portions of a kimono worn at the time of the explosion.

¹³This is the episode of the Penitents.

MICHAEL BASINSKI

VASE OF CIXIA

of the body it becomes lost
but fit to be seen and
meant to appear to others
in lines of red, black, blue and
areas of white.
feather down plant fluff
red and white. areas and
attached with human blood
fantastic characteristics of style
the head and body as a treat
unit, twings, grass, and
human hair merge
“the fundamental idea is
that of camouflage”
the virgin swings above
the white. world
that has opened Is
in both realms ignited
by Sileni and Maenads
acting and dancing thus
this urge to appear

MARTINE BELLEN

POEM FROM A HEIGHT

A white robe in the eighth month when the moon is at full

A wet nurse out of milk

Sweet rush and water oats

The hour was marked to be afraid of things

Negligent in the north side of a house all day long amid falling
flowers and flying fluff

She only allowed the man with whom she had an affair to see her,
and even he, only when her mouth was open, her clothes-lining
mouth, her scent-impregnated mouth, the place where her palace
was. It was possible to grow young herbs there as they were hid-
den by drifts.

but one might circumvent the danger by first pro-
ceeding in a different direction.

.rice ear swelling mouth.

White was written to describe her, though it was pronounced blue
since blue in the sense of green was spring.

.tamarind mouth.

Dear Brother:

birds of passage eclipse the moon, and a body rolls a thing that has
no name, even in the wine dregs of Babylonia which resemble
shores and what gets lost in them, what I have lost to them

This morning I was quite out of spirits. He showed me the stream-
let which he had betrothed. She shivered in light and I knew per-
fectly well what he saw in her as he sorted his seed while kneeling
by his streamlet; it rained and blew;

while wind passed away

in the passing that is death a great deal of electricity lay. that
is near the old city where you dream to one day find yourself.

We not only share existence, we also form it and let it go when need be.

After having stopped loving a particular someone, she might feel as though she has become someone else even though she is the same person. She might think how sad the pools and shallows are that hear with clear ears and the first cry of birds, whose beaks are tucked under wing and muffled like how she felt under him and lying. Once up he did not instantly pull on his trousers but whispered into her all that was left unsaid

It should be known they were speaking through a screen so that their thoughts would not be heard.

When the master of the tavern stole my heart he turned it into roast though materiality of body does not stop at that. This principle, so simple, could be considered empty and proves the impossibility of acquiring any new habit as reasoning shuts us up in a circle. Action is a type of intelligence too but so is thought when it makes the leap and leap it must.

She asked him why she could only be his shadow – a prehistoric memory that dies if touches mother earth? Darling, my flesh is bleeding from years of scaling trees, inhaling bark, said she. Only, he scoffed, only you say! My shadow is the closest dearest extension of myself. It is my limitation and freedom. You are that, all.

No, she said, we see differently. to you woman is absence. and, I cannot be.

Dear Brother,

Why do you live in a house with such narrow gates?

The ant skims quickly over water's surface and fleas dance under my clothes and in the breeze they lift. No, I do not care if this poem is suitable for this season but am beginning to grow angry that you altered me so that I am alone in this field until winter's

end, unaware and head bent. One arrives at nightfall in an unfamiliar place but prefers to sit near the others even though they are hidden by dark and eating strawberries. One has gone to a friend's to avoid an unlucky direction.

In the morning we were a cloud, in the evening the rain. but with so much mist who knows

The sky was uncertain and I stepped out of animal mind. Whatever one sees is a flower and what one dreams is a moon. All other forms or specters are transmissions of these.

fretful feeling. that

jumping from this building.

a tree.

JULIA BLUMENREICH

CHEVRON

There are pink flowers where yellow dragons once were;
in a small square a person confronts
of another race & religion.

The small square are my two hands,
her fingers having deep creases
rivers with rocks at the bottom.

(the sexes began to be distinguished by he & she in the late 14th
century)

Drumming
the table, the flat heights of her cheeks
coiling light.

(where the two are pieces, inclined

Dressed-mummy-shuffle
protection, body skimming floor
move around one another,
all ways from her or my perspective common-folk,
S-curving to one the other.

(before they were distinguished)

What will she say to me?
the pink dragons yellow flower

we can pour our unknown selves
into the bowl-parts
mix our temperature, bad tastes,
jangles, love-making,

and the forget: the glass beads
around my neck, the marbles
she fingers stolen
from a friend's pockets.

Get on the aroma,
like sex, the ego
loses boundaries
where now there are soft
definitions of flesh
lips luggaging words

(mark of rank, goat, she or
what fortune in the same
or worlds apart of our hand lines —
roads to the cave.

CHARLES BORKHUIS

SLICE OF LIFE

start with the words

ceremony

at the center
of a disturbance

season of spare parts

(to have stared at the same stain
for 15 years)

to open the cover of a book and find
a miniature author inside

asleep in his coffin

the child
dressed as a ghost
carries a rubber hatchet

words attach themselves
to his eyes

the world won't let go

days dismembered by memory

Is this the language sought
or just another

inherited gesture

a way of signaling
in advance

the cop teaches his club a new twist

the irate consumer clicks his remote control

the doctor depresses your tongue with a stick

the detective bares his teeth at the neighbor's dog

the actress masturbates in her mirror
the assassin locks-in on the candidate
who's inside whom
(ghosts in the bones)
you could have fooled
my camera
every slipped desire
quietly cutting
the air into pieces
like some deranged fan

MICHAEL BOUGHN

NORTHERING

for John Clarke, 1933-1992

i.

Shrouded point to point surprised
Hudson's distant promise haze

islands following delight to
last crossing and sudden

stone into black holes burnt
wrecks along the tracks

Don't forget your map
will fail leaving only

body's quick direction deep
in earth as H.D.'s distant geese

whose same tiny magnets
and syntactic north, that star, turn

ii.

Falling to bone along mother
father dreams, chronometric

dilemma, north a memory
a cold intervention still groans

paradaisal storm over Erie
ice miles high where shadows

of angel's *wind tangled wings*
compelling stars in lunar flesh

allotted leaves this bursting
which *an inch off* devours

itself and fragile grief, Achilles'
tears from Jack's insistence

on West point of imagination's
necessity or *the changes*

of the constellations
and positions of

the supernal worlds
which are the garments

iii.

Shattered pieces struggle no fall
worth speaking, augurs same

leaves though something else
entirely beyond distant peaks

Colón's earthly paradise trembled
otro mundo while below decks

thousands of "pieces" sickened
died, lost needle tug

at heart of between, uninvited
misprision too close to intent's

eternity of downfall and repaired seal
what light and dark we vaguely know

stretch taut nerves' net
till we're left humming a place

in pain's hollowed heart at
allegory's crossed boundaries

iv.

Struggling a shape for know
gnaws a short theme

unavoidable body's rise
and fall a scheme repeating

child's lesson elsewhere grown
into tree tears, walking the bark

up and up beloved birch
edge of stone and sky

(nine notches, one for each
heaven and a dead horse

to ride along beat bequeathed
in pain till another tune rises

*(on the ceiling near my
head)*, clothed in noise

we rule to walk a line
fades in trumpet's gentle fall

v.

Ancient lace across leagues of dream
goldenrod dozing at the corner

Which flower the question closes again
this measure of tears twice removed

Have you heard the birch, broken
silence, deep teal, white bark, & a flutter

Light raises wind in Sarawak
a sudden rush, white caps licking stone

Glade of meeting mere detritus, retreating
message more silver than pond sheen

The dead's assurance in blue-green rings
voice's clear center behind the fragment skin

Far from sea, sea murmurs soothe
gull's cry, distant boat slaps wave

An imperfect ear to sky drowned
in ruins of summer & blood's tumult

Wounded heat by morning's issue
cruel glory, cat's paw light on white birch face

Beyond distance, beyond blue, beyond skin
sinks into cat's cry, jealous birds, breakfast chatter

While beneath orphaned stone's skin in oozy
time, patient, open, in, to

LEE-ANN BROWN

THANG

With a milkweed pod

With a white cat on your lap on your minister's bed where you later touch your first girlfriend's nipple and start to cry

In the car in front of your parents house while you're home for a visit with a boy from highschool surprised at how nice it feels

Up against the car on the side of the highway in the middle of the Mojave desert with huge semis going by One of you has your period.

In a japanese treehouse in a youth hostel near Brunswick GA with j & j after drinking rum josh leaves julie and I stay on & on

In your half dream with the guy who brings the lunch

With poets you read

On your side or back with him coming up behind you from the side, you thrust downwards

Being on top pressing down with your bone on his or her thigh or pelvic bone your fingers in her or on you if you are a man and or a woman.

Or this way with your fingers in me from the back your arms are long enough

Slowly licking your cunt or cock, your cock going inside and outside my mouth you never know which

Worrying and sucking and circling your clit, tasting your cunt while at the same time your pulling fingers in and out of you only after kissing down your neck very slowly to get there

In memory that doesn't make you sad or anticipatory

With a purple dildo borrowed from Patty

In the middle of the day even though we have visitors in the other room

Under the new paper umbrella I just bought in Japantown. We miss the dance.

On the Murphy bed which makes lots of noise

On your back I touch you and come you make me stop.

In the piano room on the floor I'm in my tennis shoes and Sarah's pink gown saying "I'm ready" later "Better get it!"

Right after your tour twice to the same Beatles album with "and my guitar gently weeps."

In the hottub place in downtown SF because we were living at your parents.

At the Columns in New Orleans after that dream of wearing wet silk joined onto your dream of the shining ocean, hot though for the air conditioner, it's dark when we wake up moving then we go out to eat soul food or crawdad jambalaya several times

On acid and you think he's a horse you & I go up and up and both feel it but you're all over him the next day and the next year.

We're in the front seat they're in the back I didn't like when you stood up and pissed by the creek after turning around when we were only kissing sticking your cock in my throat and coming uninvited so I straighten my foot in my character shoes and crack your mother's windshield that was not a way of making love

In the treehouse where I played Narnia and lost my purple sweater with pearl buttons we rub together with our clothes on

By the pool I put you in my mouth you come out before you come you're scared of me

I hold you down and press

I bring you Krispy Kremes after church you're still in bed and stretch up out of the blankets

You suck on my nipples for what seems like three hours as the 8 track of Cat Stevens goes around and around

You finally let me touch you after months and months you taste like lobster bisque and honey

In the press to the coatroom after the Rosewood Ball you put your fingers in my cunt while I look over your shoulder I don't need your name

On the floor in the empty room you are amazed I've () but haven't fucked yet

LAYNIE BROWNE

VERSIONS

She needs just something to fill
The eye which reminds
Her of missing

•

A way to monitor tides
When removed from the ocean
The tossing of her body
A glass filled with salt beside her bed

•

When she
Only has
Herself
To feed
She finds
She is hungrier

•

In what falls
Off of the wall
She finds gracefully
Letting go

Of a picture
He stood a hand
Full of tentative blossoms
Finally sent
Fallen under her table
Not to be planted in wood

•

For desire the object or subject
She holds a chestful of breath
To discuss wind in terms of hurricane

•

He stumbled to pull her open
To have her heart as a kind of permission
To say *I have gone here*

•

She solves some problems with shoe-polish
Others by pulling down shades

What the eye sees
And chooses to marry
It can also remove
 Or remarry every moment

•

Issues containing more than one
Object subject or shoe
Days with more desire have more
Moments and many falling pictures

•

If you leave her alone in wilderness
She will listen for moving water
If she finds a river she will follow its banks

Hoping to find those who began a civilisation

•

And if none has been founded
She might choose to stay
And begin
To build at its mouth
Listen to the rush of lips

•

An oak tree of considerable shade
A hillside with slope of knee to calf

Delighted with the weather they danced
Until the day no longer shivered for being so young

•

Medicinal we call her
The inscrutable bird in her breath
Might mutter unspeakable phrases

•

Fingers longing pushed into and open
Then set to work to release a resonance

•

Skin beneath her heart is so well placed
And unnoticed by the eye

CLINT BURNHAM

UNPOPULAR CULTURE

CHILDERMASS

there is a sudden hissing
like that of cats or grease

I hope I die
before I get to heaven

CHILDERMASS 2

there was a sudden hissing
like that of cats or geese

I hope I die
before I get too heavy

WHINING LOSERS

tod tos pit ,hec om please
drivelling ash edo so,b
lowing gash

hec on tenuous Thep
eons beacon apart
unsodden Uma steady
photasm

THE UNGYVED BED

the pography desi a ract
runs wit he rush
toss off epume
peed dram up he meres
'ine wod old sin
he indigent loom
mum oft idle
water fills our ears

distingui
shed
thing as
it robes

angle?
twine
huts by
less than
foils

almost

gorge

arranged

terror

solvent

filaments

was

thinner

arcs

seep

the

bends

that

fresh

drown

DAVID CAMERON

TWO POEMS

In the coonskin club we emulated Davy Crockett's walk
but I shook my ass too much and was accused
of being a faggot. Later
I took the eldest of those would-be trail-blazers
into the high branches of a tree and stroked him
until his small voice shook and the moon shone on his face.
Soon the other boys learned to drool after my hip-switchings
and piled on each others' backs
to poke their heads around the corner
leering at the ass
of the king of the wild frontier.

10/18/92
2 Berkeley

13

Tonight on juniper

I jumped

at the sound of your voice

how you had shaved clean

the mountain but the mountain

holding and we saw only one bear

but he was far below us

8/13/92

10th St

CYDNEY CHADWICK

FROM *SPEECH HAPPENS*

Change your name to avoid remote control. Hot bath is tiring. Thinking may have a tendency to take up the waking hours. Fix the broken places, go on display and no one can see the cracks. Competition of selves. Wives in the distance creating a presence when absence is the desired effect. Men crying "Gaa". A system of removal. Sound of one fist punching. Up the steps into kitchen. Configuration. Muffins. Black and white squares. Measuring distance. A television commercial. Tear that end up in the tea cup. Change the memory and click away.



Behind the corner where syllables and syntax sleep. Facing the blue. Staring through holes in the words. What good is a body of language that fails to rescue, or fails to sweep away. Eddies of flotsam. Nouns flit like moths. And so? Swim for cover. Pools and ponds are safer than these oceans. Persona mouths parrot pleasantries. Most articulate when engaged in sexual acts. Or lucid.

Hearts have been broken by monosyllables. Speech sounding angry. Tightroping toward destiny. Sands like firm ground are comforting places around edges of inarticulateness. Feet on ground is reassuring. Like whispers. When the sun comes up the voices rendered mute. Coffee confrontation. Vocal chords twisted into plaintivity. Speech happens. Who takes it from you? Now and No are resolute. A series of repetitions. Teetering through mazes. Liquid language grows strong, physical like waves. Despondent body. Crawling to and fro, toward a concept, an intention. Wading. Sunset futility.

I ended up her. Someone calling, but of course I didn't answer because I'm not. It's really disconcerting to see a baby as old as you are. I've found out that if you enclose the tear in your psyche no one can tell the difference. A rock-bottom artifact; I cringe to your touch. I sought love and found a stick figure. Have I really been in a bad mood since I was fifteen? I always survive in a fog, but it beats falling into a river of toxic waste, or getting called for jury duty. But then it's really a matter of what you want out of life, isn't it?

Spend all my time in church and my starving, emaciated body an irritant. Sublime ascending when stained glass abstracts into pure color — we're really living now. Given beads and told to trust a book. The years that pass without sunlight or time. A black and white world like a television that's against the rules. Back up against Catholic grass and someone quoting Augustine. Parochial school costs raised to subsidize the priest's legal fees. Fingers pressed on a heartbeat. In the communion photos all of us looked sad. Life in a box. Is there nothing between coffee and a book? Reality where you find it.

Downloaded girlfriend. An icon in a comic. Zoning on meaning (false). Subjectivity (passes the time). Stepping into an empty elevator shaft, the old B movie approach to get rid of a difficult character (me). The white intention of a beach. Arrested night and development. That sadness that takes a bite out of me. Aporia plunder. A laugh can be dangerous. Eaten alive.

LEW DALY

FROM *THE TEN ECSTATIC TONGUES*

IV

All that we recall in hearing words
remains unspoken by what is implied
by words we find when we respond in turn.
What is unheard remains unspoken by, yet not
distinguished from what is implied
by silenced words when we respond to God.
It has been said that love's anachrony
is not supplied by even timeless love.
What we supply by hearing words is thus
conjoined to what remains unspoken by
the call of who is heard and our reply
in being named by he who calls us forth.
The pain of who is heard resounds
with what responds to mute the universe
of nightly purer and unfettered sound.
He whose name it is, that is recalled
from who is called by name, becomes
himself the missive sound to which
now mute he must respond to live.
It has been said that as it sends him forth
he is less nameless than the past he left
and yet more silent than the end it brings,
though it is said as well, that he
is nameless less than left alone
to make amends when he returns in-tact
to mask once more the fact that madness lives.
Now mute he must become the one resound
still not forbidden from the name of God.
Transparent now, he must himself surmount
the bounds of pain become the one resound
still not surrounded in a name he said.
It has been said that he is nameless less
than lucent as the past returns. For
madness, too, is but a semblance there
and yet it does not hide a different truth

than it reveals. A different truth
 than death reveals the victim's pain.
 Whose pain has been forbidden from
 yet set amongst the many names
 he left unsaid, inflicts in him
 his mass against the immanence
 from which it's raised, and thus
 the face of he whose pain
 has been forbidden from and raised against
 became the grave of many masses sent
 to death in the event of being named.
 What has been raised has still another name
 not yet unabsented as pain, yet past
 the threshold of the pain that he inflicts.
 Who is consumed must stand beside himself
 in holding-forth to be a portent's pore
 through which unabsented remains before
 the face must pour to merge for all the world.
 In prayer it has been said that both
 the damned and saved, to merge
 must pour in name between the parted lips
 of every corpse of the unborn and dead
 beneath the earth and in the birthing-bed.
 One-chambered as the heart of half-
 unhindered, half-impairing pain
 forbids the blood to live, so too
 within the heart of love, in part
 the start of darkness lives. The last
 of its commanded tasks, in place
 once more upon the point of no return
 returns the heart to God. The point
 beyond return goes through my heart
 when it departs before the face of God
 through which the path to it, to reach
 itself once more around, itself withdraws
 upon the point beyond return
 within the heart as it embarks unbound.
 Allure within the Infinite
 not independent of collective love
 is more again than any force
 exacted from the love of pain, itself
 a faith untold to human love.
 I realize now that I was he who knew
 no other way to be than I presumed

to be the reason I could live no less
 when I deserved to die, than when my right
 to die became the same assent
 to death as my intent to slay. I saw
 that I could not return
 when I arrived, yet I was not allowed
 to enter-in when I accepted pain. I was
 myself exhumed, as in its stead
 when I contained the name I meant to say.
 When I depart I am inflicted with the pain
 that I desire to impart when I arrive.
 He whose pain afflicts him for
 inflicting it cannot remain, yet he departs
 as but a victim bid goodbye by naming God.
 The law of the song sung to God
 is the haul of disgrace. The victim's refrain
 is disgraced by the presence of song.
 The song sung to God reinstates
 both the names it commends to the law: these
 are the names of the saved
 still not wholly undamned, and the damned
 getting ready to rise
 while the dead are alive. One day
 I will not return, yet I cannot depart
 when I know that I want to arrive. I must
 remain until I see another face. The face
 that I sought founds the silence
 I fled by its side. What if I cannot awake
 when I open my eyes? The face
 that I saw is the silent foundation
 of summons that crowned at its summit
 inside of the mind, every pleasure and pain
 with the light of the sky. I must remain
 until I see as from a face
 not yet the same yet still itself a trace
 displaced and still too far away to weep
 away with tears the world it wakes. The shift
 when it awakes and sets its gaze aright, and
 it is faced to sate its tears instead, is but
 the rift within a landscape still, abysmal now
 as bliss between the shame and yet
 the namelessness of the remaining man. He said
 that I could not remain, yet I have said that I
 cannot escape the hand that I had led away

with mine upon the path to face a God. My bliss
misled his missive just the same, once more
as on its way to me, today with what it had
itself been due from human pain
before a person lived. He said
that pain itself became
a sense when it depends still less
upon the bliss of its ascent
than it depends on the ascent of bliss.

DANIEL DAVIDSON

FROM *BUREAUCRAT, MY LOVE*

Dancers wet their lips foundlings without letters
 to be written for the length of her
 in tandem walks and walks
 so many silences dropping tragically into sound
 so much variation and the noticing of poise
 the meeting of strategy and care emptied where desire makes
 its mark.

Places gather spread of travel vanity of heart
strings of the completed time the insistent remains
a thought a crowd.

There are no faces.

Nothing draws you quite as you might expect. Shouted down by
fullness

words and phrases
in the bitter mouth
this misreading is exactly accurate
vessels of reflection I am waiting here the figure coming into
view

touching as if I could keep your share
expelled from the surrounding possibility of rooms.

From a letter: "It is the lies we see that watch us."

I will not write because the words will tip the balance of work and push the grey mood into the long and lost possibilities of dreaming.

I will only scratch my back with necessity that pupa rapier the
frozen north of ground to heat a frightening of forms: perma-
nence impermanence. trust to synch or. opposite speech.
movement. the security of death. collapse. the shifting
weight.

I woke myself from a dream and sleep memories the brief

tattoo the chimes of legs upon the ground.

The world opens onto a shell and awaits its skin if the skin can be described has it already formed? if my hand touches the plaster dress has it already touched its perfect body? if I write myself a world can I displace you into a mutual wellspring?

Every face is a gesture even you in the soundless light.

Think of this: to withdraw from the world would not beg in or begin no track would be kept no opening into the doors would close there are no doors the light-absorbing view encloses.

I think I shift upon a sheaf and sift my whys until the past no longer is displaces
gentleness that cold sand prays to and releases."

Staring outward she approximates a statue that thinking absorbs and disgorges
after all the sound of cursing and denial
in this interview you have forgotten my eyes.

But there is one name spoken do you harm the talk you call from me?

Opening you a sheepish grin a fair brocade of red write a simple letter
a typical object the shape hammers away
and now we are at the center of the world link palms and predict.

Within the white zone border of commit
time of approximate care
strip mine the complete zero through one
about the size of a hand knowledge or room for participation
belief handles its sword.

Now I am withdrawn like bombs beneath the soil I have no need
that this hotel that this cafe why bother
I have reason for streetwalking essentially chaos mistrust and certainty.

One moment we speak of and the next in contact

after all they have departed
in an arm's distance in the shape of violence
the noticed view is soaked of its rack

and now that I am gone remembers.
Suppose we survive uncover the blooded world in a string of
questioning

syllables fuse
how quickly the dark precedes its cup
the blushing body of intervals. I finish and leave.

Dear correspondent scrawl out our reserve and composure.
Saboteur restore the charm of these inconsistencies.

To deceive us one year follows each day
here we are incapable of single actions
all faster in the time it takes to speak
unassigned disengaged
unbelieving running fingers over its surface.

I think our flowers lie simple reasons
like the stream of traces
the building of blooms
this way may not account for our lines
until we are again within the gate you were not yet completed in.

Return to her shroud. Finally there is no audience.

Complete this dark color temperaments and disagreements
here I have sold nothing
sight takes careful aim licence hung a flawless rope
conditions favor another world sounding this rhyme of semitones
far too close for the hard punch-drunk wheat

as is unexpected not only in one direction no one controlled
this

anything said absorbs careful to come home to.

Not knowing is no requisite has as its fascination pleasure and
terror.

In a fitting immateriality the novel is more real than it seems.

I stretch out my arms a novice in the weather.

Giving and given in lights dim and glow
 this standing where the shadow of falls has always been a distant
 gleam

an endless myth of sustenance
 whose shell is handed in engagement
 hold the shell to the ear
 the low accepting tone speech of layers resting on the warm
 ground.

I write your death of sense rattles in a vague room
 pen hands the knife the supreme gift
 cup of shatters tourists never leave it
 crop of lice spool of dread.

In the morning dreams awaken with you
 as a quickening in the air reliving action and thought
 what comes of instinct and the punctured spine
 the lacquered mouth there issues pleasures clearer than the
 breach
 portraiture and its yellowing and other extravagances
 parody or wave smile of slitting wrists
 a yielding form.

Such an attitude is difficult to express
 blank device before the mask was invented
 what is read or reads us these bodies of modality
 bread and soil singularity along its wake

allowed each fossil or play of law or cloth to wear
 books and observatories trafficking in invisible features.

Blood bores me and all the stones holding still
 close to the water's edge.

KEVIN DAVIES

FROM *CONCRETE STEPS*

People want everything.
Food, rules, hammocks.
Frequent televised enjambments that
teach morals to tomorrow's pensioners,
hope to the headless shut-in.
People, by which I mean several people
other than but similar to yourself, want to *know*
the universe to *be* expanding, and to correlate
that fact with their own wish
for a dignified dispersal or sudden collapse
into total rebirth. They *told* me this.

•

People want people
to refill them selves.
People want refills.

Garish little episodes.

The Nixon mask
won't come off.

ain't a world
ain't a hospitality suite —

•

Who owns, oh happy life!, this aria.

Affability
as mistaken identity.

The route we use to get from one weather station to one rifle
range is qualitatively unrelated to the route we accidentally choose
to get back from our current theories to our previous self-
hyphenations.

Iraqis with buttons
in the glare of new determinations.

You are why you eat.

•

Lovely barns.

Whose roofs retract
like the foreskin of an ur-parent
after a day of hunting
for sunlit plateaux.

We're related
previous to our supposed stations

on hellish ice floe along
an eventual coast.

JEFF DERKSEN

PHALLIC COFFEE

The pure phrases are aggressive
and our only contact
is commerce. A tiered role model
is “speaking up” physically.

This is the oldest city
known to typography —
an exclamation point
off the coast. It’s undone

business of history
by the sea, the fort
at the end of the point
is a military base. “Todo
por la patria” is red,
yellow, and sedimentary.

The presence of authority
and vice versa.

“Al Andaluze 1492-1992.”

At this time
the general feeling is
get it out of my body.

Here, everyone mentions
the light — I didn’t want to
“embalm the event.”

Now there’s no architecture
as signage takes its place,
some snow too. The people
don’t fit their own space.

HOST NATION, HOST SOCIETY

In an unpeopled blur
articulated families hop
commodity. "A conceptual
splitting of the figure
into two symmetrical halves. . . ."

But glass
or class ghosts me

walking the edge of exchange —
watches, valves, ballbearings
double in the windows
on the street
before the waterfront.

"In order
to enter into history
it is not enough to be
born physically."

Five-hundred-year-old
quotation marks
around the word
discovered. Please don't
add an *L*. For tourism

the nation is not a
"long excursion by land,
almost always ending up
injured or weakened
by the extra effort."
It's us salvaging me

as a sum of sensations. Skirted
by goods and portraits
of navigators.

How a landscape holds
strata or a depth distrusted
nodding whole, a geographic
christening.

*Our forests, our trees, our
moss, our lichen, our site-
specific species. They need
management.*

Solo irony's gender
demographics: unequal
as an etching in the field
of focus, pushed
passive and curious
on the edge. First,
second, third. Pigeons
on the facade ledges
are the memory of "a surprising blend
of old and new" in
a Plaza of Commerce.

"... As though sliced from head to tail
and spread flat
around the decorative field."

STACY DORIS

VOLUNTEER VOLUPTUARY

She bodies or strategies
the vegetable attributes
to undertake turning stiffens first
til volcanoes twin
all the tricks dealt
rolling so a fluency
burps full of wants
against further
we both
the fault's
for decades entertained
and branching good-bye

VULTURE – THE TEARING

as in all eyes out
of a cup rolls
fluff it
enough now for hair's
gulp in velvet
he archaically pledged:
“I aspire to, make haste, long for,
pursue”
a pasture chased
leader
ovals so pardonable
shaggy material
these lips forget
ravenous for jumping
or else wetted fade
to you do dance divine

WIFE – VIBRATE

Look something's flapping
lady minces
the treetop slapstick
victual wedges
envy to invite
an emulsion
can that challenge
on a card basis yes
deals in charities
bright offers
beyond decision swayed
such as mandarin
peels, compound yeast
tomorrow and yesterday
yours was apluck

WIG

Parakeet harmonious
through a kind of lottery
barren reproached
pledges hop and deride
he starts a tremble
a vibrate, quiver
thing, little demon
energetically hiding

STEVEN FARMER

REMNANT METRICS

rise
radio yellow
field
district mirror
cup to the sky
the blasting dish
the grey stoney ridge
calm with its toothpicks and manuals
severed
realm. . . . ignorant sound retreat
come from a town of mustard sandlots
find a grade of tool that will hit
will the print dim the skies
stop time definition
within this wellspring
a card for your life
the extreme is now like a close friend
televised crime
the guitars sound like cans
gestures and moral rhetoric
there are a lot of people who want to feel good
demand for images of violence
we must dress in black to express abuse
the food is tortured

the room is French
to lay by my side under water towers
tenants pledge their asexuality
bugles warble to bring in the century
stretch of clouds on a road of clay
I really like it. . . . what does it mean
a random science
a pattern of strikes
instruments of deception
a concocted sound that precedes the images
as fragile as it is suggestive
a light from the sun
socket stain on the paper
burning solvent and grit
the guitar's destruction
pattern of interference
cope with silence
disease
want some liquor? some coffee?
a plaid and fur blanket?
cut-out eye holes
job and fear principle
disappear narrative
disappear trees
is there anyone here by the name of Odd
Dreams of the Creator
kind to have offered these rustic and heathen plates
rain hatred

are you going home. . . . is it fever or vision
family member is now a person
crayon hi-way memory shutter
a vessel to each
boulders flashing along the broken grades
chimes are stuck
broken logic imprint
the notes were indistinguishable
the guitar began to ring

DEANNA FERGUSON

CRISIS IN MY AMERICA

Alien Backs Bush
Constitutional Talks

Sometimes We
 Deadwood Dick
 before We speak
 throwing up honey
Around sinks
 and in damp cellars and
 in mines
where it may transport
in form of thralldom
 'parently a double thing
 revolving around its selves
 invisible and naked
for the looking

Probably horizontal drew
 settlers around it. The Bluff.
Bucket scooped in to the chute
 hopper barged along moorside
 Suck built up a
low lying ground. Heaven Will Protect
 the Working Girl

A fat big name
 for just so. Practically
alone. Smiled and sank
 off the lectern throwing an
 air of mystery into the brewery
Joe Blow died fighting

spaces between wholly occupied
and the slender poem
The relics brought way back by the bunny

Biographical usage omits some here
at times indicated by often small
relics insignia traffics attention
to time in writing
in arbitrary shortening of time

in flavour reformation
of his younger brother
captured in bohemia
insurrecting against language infection
they occur common like a boil

He was unsuccessfully argued
I swerve the swamp of misfortune
He continued formally a daughter
one of the "blue stockings"

This less familiar adsorption is molecular hexing
this scan cannot be canceled
as for Bing's toupee
dispersing drops of jelly
contracting into globules animated by
fetish power I now desire
the dry wet spot
the postcard
cum *punctum*
and a framework of strong iron bars

Chosen to fill the first
graving sex campaign

still unfinished, so later, systems of
stupefaction open between prospects of
reflection and fair anchorage. Alone
more now
wrangling baffle, rusty
as the old revolt
Ordered to dissolve, refused

This spotted earth's complete reaction
mineral come extinct and instinct
enough, titles become
amphibia and genitalia

Campaigning into the life cycle
all the girls
in the office read Shklovsky

Yo reader throbbest
the same as I
Press over for a side lunge
and hold
be bit map be tie-dye
been painted stalagmite the chant
rode hard
put away wet

Ladies in Daytons
elegant extracts in verse
a port for any storm
what little fuck
evokes a landscape

That's right now yank up my vest and
pull my shirt tail

SEAN FINNEY

SOMETIMES THERE ARE SINGING THREADS UNBIDDEN

My world unbidden,
closeted uproar of the veins
circle the stomach of a doubt.
Wrenched supple we were turning vast
locks ships mysteries the upper decks
(some beating roped off my heart)

Stuck to the roof of my mouth
I was going to.

Take certain steps like teeth wrenched,
vice for the juicy yesterday

give me the harvest of an old autumn
all fruits dropped to seed and none were stored,
nor were taken back, nor was I
put to seed,

nevertheless
autumn running rich the grass-scorched fingers
for a cheek and the curve how many,
how many do you know?
the times and ways, and how well?

was yesterday kept,
Upright on a lonely beach.

ROBERT FITTERMAN

WAS, IS

*is the world
at the World's Fair*

LZ

off
the F

that smell

not piss
but Spring
brisket
from your
uncle's

building
reaches
the open
world where
day is

coming up
the stairwell where all the world is
going, going,
was, was

ELEVEN STREETS DOWNTOWN

walled elm
all weed
aluminum trim
palm brass

door arm
watery noon
rates allowed
luscious

red metal heaps
fountained
punch-clock gray
machinery

crowded domes
world's gold
spire's snake
blue oval

plaza sags
vendor's curved
boxes of watches
chrome

rome's end
bozo's spread
the shore left
shimmers

in dutch
pastry sails
looming a
mall sudden

angel and
lattice at
entrance's vase
and sparkles

grime in pillars
 lewd accused
a blue cut
 heeled in

pleasure pleats
 pressed shoulders
this branch's glass
 bank's lunch

clock pier a model
 plan of workers
on the move
 lacquered

green cart
 readily apples
child shops First
 Portuguese

rain thin
 stones leaves
low clouds ruler
 tile roof

navy chevy mere
 gesture railing
cardamom bulk
 butchers wiping

tucked in cream
 sweaters orange
and green seafood
 sign garden soot

DAVID FOX

HI, MOLOCH

I'm your biggest fan.
Dangerous enough to be interesting.
The minutes seem like hours, hours seem like yours,
Whores seem like somebody else's.
Hold on:
We have an expiration for that.
Located at the corner of 86th and Jobless,
When we cut your hair, it stays cut.
I do my part, eat the nuclear-fed beef,
Relative of Lyle Alzado. Gas-ripened salad.
Now wave me a potato, will ya? Suffering from mall-burn.
Ninety-nine bottles of Bayer on the wall.
Any propeller-head will tell you
You got toxic shock for a lifestyle
And you're *proud* of it. I love this, 'tis of thee.
Ah work, there we feel free. Bone us.
Bad dog. No biscuit.

WRY T'ANG

Just exactly what boils down to Mark Rothko's suicide?
A place for music, ask anybody with a hootin' haircut. For poetry?
The Haight exists so that everyone can feel like a conformist.

If you could save the dead, well wouldn't we all.
All books are good, now let's go kill trees.
You gotta go into this world if you want that world.

A Burning Bush: A2000. A Mumbling Bush: change channels.
Just shoot me up and give me a pen. A felt tip.
Post-Language Writing. There, I said it.

The copy says more about its writer than the product.
Guaranteed to give you the experience you need.
Sophomoric, self-consciously hipper-than-thou.

We invent ourselves in you and what do we get in return?
Essay essee.
His speed gets him to the wrong place quicker.
The most important question you can ask about a work:

If my grandmother bothered to read it, would she like it?
Snow on all three tvs.
A razor blade, a vein, and a wall? What about coffee?

Somebody gotta be not amused. The normal sexual explosions.
Okay, eighty-six 86% of this and maybe we got something here.
Pollock is skidding again somewhere. Contact.

SKIP FOX

READING A LETTER FROM

his mother, sunlight rushing the edges, shadows jerked
at his hand. Or directions (where to ford, what's in a mountain
pass?) from those who'd gone before, a map. From which
unfolds . . .

Suicide always seemed beside
the point. Inexact. An increasingly inadequate
response.

Around the next
bend, the sheer lake, colors tighten in the wind, voices
from the earth blow off, and the air that blurred arms and
chest moves at last like the unmelodious whistling of indefinite
duration.

Or driving for days just to reach the out
skirts (the ego hath such distentions), arriving at the clue
less present in time with a punchline dark as inner city (nowhere to
leave from, nowhere to go), cancellation burning our hands

as once
there was a man walked into a bar without a lisp or twelve-inch
pianist, never caught a leprechaun, etc.

or driving into a culvert
for a swift *vacuus ex machina*, meeting the wind on its own
terms

as it turns in the high trees above, fronting the whole land,
abrupt
and insistent, as the wind in him turns into the jest, the last
gas station for a thousand miles and nothing beyond that lucent
mass moving into present

BENJAMIN FRIEDLANDER

HOME FROM WORK/AFTER THE WAR *for Bob Grenier*

The white cat with a
tight collar and that followed
Pat down the block,
weaving between her
legs, rolling over
in the gutter

Who else is awake
at 4:30 a.m.? Who starts
their car
while the worker sleeps,
the teacher sleeps,
the bootstrap
policyholder
who missed the last
payment, the bike shop
owner with the dented
impala, the NRA bumper
sticker,
I ♥ my dog

Horrid teeth I cried and chewed
in my bosom
Others feigned a smile, effortless
like dollars in a frozen skein
of open funds, ye monstrous times
astride the homely plain

March 1991

THESMOPHORIA

sworn by conventional
weapons to overthrow, she'll
be coming round
the mountain when she comes

weighed down
by the blink
of a red light's
career

by the crook of her
smile she repeals
by the look of her bent
back she is in pain

RECESSES
(for Julie)

Graced to labor
in the mind
quarrying
for like kind

A full moon's
milky path
goat-stepped
over the bridge

Children in their
stared revenges
slide the board
and run away

TRAFFICKING IN US

What is a question?

Answered by a word

a word held back

from us

the question of God

What is an answer?

Questioned by the word

the word retracts

from God

an answer of love

MICHAEL FRIEDMAN

WATER

I dreamed I invented a new perfume, *Michael Friedman's Night of Magic*. Fluted columns, pink clouds. Allen Ginsberg reviews formula in lab: "It just might work...." But when I woke up it was only water. Or pee. The day began inauspiciously enough with a body on the tracks. A dab behind the ear. Then, at the office, the gloves came off. Voice mail retrieval. After I cooled down, I put them back on and punched myself up to the next level. Dinner on the ground. CNN. Drinks with Miguel at Bice. Then another dream: frightwig, secretary of the treasury, edge of reef.

GHOST

White cliffs of Dover. When was the last time I thought of you,
punting on a small river or behind the wheel of your Bentley? The
sheet we called Norman. Sometimes one feels completely alone.
Or maybe just overtired. For years I wandered along the coast,
with only a kilt to my name. *Capisci?* Bluebirds over.

MARA GÁLVEZ-BRETÓN

NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES AND OTHER UNNATURAL ACTS

I.

1. Mara Gálvez-Bretón reciting names of presidents (U.S.), numbers (of stripes, stars, senators), obscure amendments to obscure amendments/under a breath.
2. Is she grateful that the other is hungry/hasty: an interviewer – afro-american, goddess-plump and antic/ipating – antics of a few white bureaucrats (overgorged, insatiable) after all less imperative (weighty?) than the wait/weight of emptiness in her alimentary?
3. Metonymic. The elementary relationship between her esophagus and the roman numerals XII. Or metaphorically: twelve = S.O.S., you know.
4. Naughty Leona! Nothing should stand (or sit, for that matter) between duty (to america?) and duty (to america). Here! Have another bellyful of red tape, thinks
5. Mara (,) contemplating dull yellow walls intermittently/ interrupted by sallow replicas of dull yellow landscapes/artists' signatures unrecognizable.
6. Because she is familiar with the anglosaxon version of "american" (i.e. world) history of the red, white and blue booklet *Most Frequently Asked Questions at the U.S. Citizen's Exam* (1992 ed.) and wanting to reiterate the Bill of Rights – at least the dates of declaration – in short, her money's worth, Goddamn it: and this lackadaisical (alas, a lack of food will ...) black woman, proceeding:
7. "Chil', you gimme a sent'ce? Write un down fo' me. Rat here, see? . . . Just 'nuf ta prove you awtic'lit? You know what a means?"
8. Mara Gálvez-Bretón writing GOVERNMENT AGENCY IS AN OXYMORON so you can imagine, my dear Nicole, Mara wondering (aloud)/pondering, "Non-verb-noun: is this sufficient enough?"
9. And Leona: "An' you plannin' on keepin' owe deese nems?"
10. And Leona: "Mehra Gollvis Britt'n Saaanchis Cruise Why

Day Lay-own?"

11. "Mara Gálvez-Bretón Sanchez Cruz y de León."

12. And Leona: "Now dat's a nem! . . . Can you repeat after me, den? I herebah . . ."

II.

13. Mara Gálvez-Bretón sitting, stretching, waving (her plastic flag?) in this strangely homogenous assemblage of citizens-2-be, thinking

What a parodic assembly/what a mock Congress this

14. assortment of polyester bodies – red, white, blue predominating – sagging or taut with expectation, thinking:

Until now, was I not a real *written?* member of *this city?*

Etymologically. Legally.

15. Because if I lip-sync the pledge of allegiance everyone has to draw the line somewhere – even Deitch says so/you've seen

Desert Hearts? –

with right index finger under the words INDIVISIBLE UNDER GOD ONE NATION, naturally or gesticulating (pantomiming) a ?

in the margins? "If I am born again, where's my water and wine?"

III.

16. "The mass, the gestures, the priests and choirboys, the litany, the singing in american or english: our nativity," says Violet slouching in the background (audience? memory?) of Mara's text.

17. Because becoming natural is essentially the same, meanwhile

18. Mara Gálvez-Bretón undergoing transliteration – Violet says, "Transubstantiation!"; Peter: "No/Confirmation!" Says:

@ the murmur of some pink official's (certainly a character out of Gogol or Kafka) gobbledygook, @ the tip of his holy Rrrrolling Wrriter.

19. Says, "Here I am born (again) on a register in the L.A. Civic Center/no nastiness, no placenta. Viva Logos!"

20. Says, "How natty!"

21. As in naturalism, an extreme form of realism.

22. As in naturalism, an extreme form of realism achieved through intense illusion/elusion – i.e. mass hysteria.

23. Says, "Children, remember this day (forever), but do not try to understand it."

24. Says, "Amen," imagining Violet slipping into inspirational – white, blue, red, satin – boxer shorts. Or mmm, that negligée . . .

FORREST GANDER

SPEAKING LOOKS

Two green colors:
the lighted and flip
side of leaves,
their interior yodel and
coo coo coo
like mourning doves.

So to recall, and see
the waking length of you
furred and rose-tipped
certain
pendance of fat,
the nest of my undoing

and consequent
words that
rivet me.

CAROLYN

Uncanny and impossible your breasts
With their punctuation awry,
Their complicated movements
Like Italian sentences, sunflowers,
Their heaviness of capital D's
Which are also heliotropic
Stunning me to my knees.

DREW GARDNER

FROM *MEDITATIONS*

1

creates amber from its wounds,
what happens, bright
obliteration of the eyes
resting in the skull, round,
the world, footsteps
in the woods, the stream before
us is, in shale revealed,
re- veiled, culture the layers *the only*
difference is they don't have
gas chambers and hot stoves to
cook us in yet, our little piece is called
meditations – that's how to
get some wire cutters before
someone gets some guns to us – bends
outside to win back the tortoise
that feeds on air, the music,
where naked scheme outdoes
the staring cormorant deep beneath
the star, the house carried on
the back, the sickle nailed
below the ocean without air, into
the ship that does appear, a country
but more the ship's within –
the table there connects the human
situation, difficult past ease
flipping through the masks
that tumble, hours
shocking thunder to
a living in and out of lines
retold, plays upon the border
surrounded by a Grackle in the
backyard – a hard staring from
a flying thing, stays, for a time,
clouds go by, the smell of shit
indecision from the former

living fills the
 garden, burying stench
 of religion killing living
 side by side but
 a fire remains the severed
 hand the flames
 stretch up from, imparts
 a chance to miss, where
 intention means to ruin
 sweet gate awaken to
 the same road, lightning
 flash reflects back against
 the kitchen wall, white
 itself and earth, the owl in daylight
 about the neighborhood
 the circling country led
 to hold — hover in the air
 across the sweetness of the field —
 in a minute,
 houses being built
 across the lot, homeless
 lived, our image wreaked
 of itself the swinging cabinet told
 what measure makes it
 through, what *here* is
 hear, corrupt, conceive but
 not the sum, only
 the playing of
 the broken world go on

12

a salamander by the path
 cruel as their flame, cut
 into the flesh of trees, freedom
 will not be given, it must
 be fought for, the fate
 of fire depends on wood
 awakening, enforced to sail
 emendates the seething
 table, perhaps a light will
 be given off, like a scale
 held above a beach, use

the oars perforce the shipwreck
a dove perches on the fence, abides
its own moving shadow cast
into the yard, mechanical,
seeds that part us from the obsolete
beads of water on the bridge's
metal handrail, Ariadne, the wind
presentiments, winding name,
the bones of a fox found on
a kind of island among
the trees, shaking net given
into marriage, a car imbues
seeds the willow drops, filled
cups, the day falls, quiet
song held in the head, I pull
a thorn out of my own foot
and set it on the desk, rest
replaces what is not enough, cicada
husks cling to the tree's passage
the velleity that fate replace
the mind foregone into music,
thistle leaning against the wall
limbs, leaves stretch out into
the air, sewing in the dark

SUSAN GEVIRTZ

FROM *PROSTHESIS*

Dear ventriloquist,

You do not know your size We measure your
intention by the number of witnesses out loud she is welcome
charges dropped

You are not the assailant driving the wrong way
down a one way street. Anything can be turned into a cause
for suspicion outlaw actual motion
without reprimand

the wasting the washing
waste ~~want~~

immersion in hands

Without name there is less to forget
Where the fathers are ashes in the mouth of
the future Where in that bend of the road they still
crouch knitting and rubbing in an attempt at sense
in the gentle and long the impossible
bandaging of themselves

forgetting

forgetting

somewhere somewhere

Dear ventriloquist,

 This uncertainty in regard to direction – For which
they are either drowned or burned – Engastriloques, under the
trees – Talking to birds – To which we reply

The price is forgotten or the price is forgetting

Season hungry for light
buildings destroyed
but still intact

Almost all we have left

Compare the sand to the sand
as the farmers wash topsoil
on to the reefs smothering fish and killing the reefs
in order to eat

somewhere somewhere as if use is legible

in the other

The new hand has an operating speed three to four times faster than existing hook-like electric hands, yet it maintains a gripping force of comparable magnitude. The closing and opening rate is similar to typical working speeds of the average human hand.

In one hemisphere the bat and in the other
hummingbirds pollinate
the same orchid One by night
another by day

The assailant got into a car

The wife of he whose sight was restored reported his great disappointment

Dear ventriloquist,
 Sky of fiberglass unrolled

ALAN GILBERT

TWO POEMS

your eyes sought the moon's blindness,
a full reflection of light
where the sun disperses our voices
through the world's burnt hollows
and we asked, after the war,
if we still had the capacity for song
pain forcing the mouth's animation

we gathered late into the night
the table full of food and wine
your dress swept against its edge,
as terror pressed against the back of your hand
you refused the movement of dawn
in going over to a different ruin

your struggle was in disruption
desire coursed into you like a storm
that ruptures the window's reflection
in the frenzy of a line that crosses over borders
the sky hardening against your brow filled with laughter

quiet was the act of your departure
moving always into the empty blue
your mouth covered with ash, the remains of a sacrifice
scattered wheat endured throughout the winter
ground became soil in the field of your returning

your body trembled amidst its silences
your face leaned into the swelling sea
a sail like a shroud pushed back the nearest shore
while crickets sang of their own dissolution

lightning sparked the dark into green,
ridding gold of its rigid form
and your grief, now less burdensome to you,
opened a drunken stillness

you knew that death is not of vision
despite the orchard's violent disorder

•

evening shadowed your now stilled laughter
a voice bent your head to its sounding
 amidst the sky's disarray
and blood alone surfaced in the clearing
the boatman's face turned in profile to the human

gesturing outside, your hand in the sea,
dusk settled into your touch
and the loneliness which gives birth to our cries,
that are much like song, spoke through a tongue
 tracing the movement of desire
the end inherent in a frenzy

the shore swerved within the storm's sweep,
while bitter smoke darkened your shoulder
lightning flashed without a syntax
briefly illuminating a distant ship
a thrown shell sketched a hollow arc
as salt blew against the lamp

you turned over a stone scratched with runes
that told of a king's death extravagant in loss
a horse struggled in heavy sand
where silence becomes a harbor, though only for a moment,
left in the wake of a violent flame

what space refused its crossing?
did you finally remain unspoken?

a bright bell trembled in blue spaces
your dread was not known,
its rhythms also coursing outside of you
you lingered in the chasms of war
offering a ripe pomegranate to the dead
and the few words of your departure
echoed there near the edge of abandon

C.S. GISCOMBE

FROM *GISCOME ROAD*

(Notes for Barry McKinnon, including lines of his)

1

(On the long road back from there I drifted
— I was on my English bicycle —
down through some commotion I made
in the landscape.)

2

There's no center where
similarity would start
nor home here in the mountains, new
or otherwise, there is no-
where out there —

3

came to necessarily centerless space, though (or the intimation
of that & out of that the specific, there

4

to which I came up some ways
(I'd come up through a long silence on the way up
to Giscome up the Yellowhead
X miles out of Prince George, N.E. of *there*

5

& turned back into the direction I'd come out of,
out of the *gap* of the landscape there, a
named edge: the juncture of *this* one little edge
in the line of trees,
the gap of that lake's many edges —

6

no more / saturday nights there

the town bull

dozed but the evidentness on passing even quickly through of something having happened there, some things having taken place there, even people

fucking, say, in the houses (those gone & the few ones left) or in the fields just past there

7

(A caravan of trucks appeared, as if ceremonial

a ceremony of trucks appeared,

the crew in their caravan coming through there to paint lines

down Upper Fraser Rd, a man was lying down on a mesh

platform at the rear gate of the first one:

as I was going back, that direction, they pressed on in past me the opposite way:

I was re-tracing,

I was an outline too, from places, we were out there

(so we waved

(Northern Road)

A long song edges in & in it I'd shout so my voice too

would be surfacing,

so sound would be all plural like description is,

or all parallel:

a long road demands the longest song repeat but that the words

disappear out of it for stretches,

be replaced by this or that vista at its edge

& by an inflection too now

& again to say an interior

— the swampy heart, the damned soul

the punishing heart (or a very jealous one)
the trifling heart, the heart of some rivercourse rising
“the coloured man’s house on Bald Mtn,” someone white put in
the heart of meadows & burns
a heart as tho’ it were hidden down in the rocks, a faceless heart
a creole heart to say the unhidden gaps in all edges up & down
the road (a heart that hammers & swings, both)
a damned soul

(Nearing town)

Consequential beyond tense
no empire of tenses but an endless present
the empire of no tense but this invisibility, received
like an exchange of greetings
& the mix of fluids & hair, appearances:
some of the *places* (the white woman in a book realized) where a vision
could be had, not a map to the vision itself
that too being nowhere, no flash of arrival there but the lights
going on down forever in a theatre, like that,
no show
ever

(& realized later in the book her own whiteness as well
or the nearness of it
so close to her it was nameless,
a space where something could have happened though nothing
would have been there, nothing similar –
“I am a place” she sd, nowhere.

“I’m wilderness” I sd on Upper Fraser Rd, I was
Africa & America on the same bicycle,
“I’m Books in Print” I sd & a shout of this name coming
on in edges across the field

(to M. Atwood)

PETER GIZZI

OFTEN I AM ALLOWED THESE MESSAGES

after R. D. & J. S.; for R. B. in the Holy Forest

as if caught up in excess
that is the undoing
but the design

having been made
is mine

an entire other to sun
so that a limb extends

to an illiterate place
wherefrom a field unfolds

wherefrom this world insists
and I say
the unimaginable distances

whose inscription remains
in the speed behind smiles
whose slippery light connects towns

and is a human power
this body

a conductor in an uninformed territory
whose banner displays a history
from an ineffable lexicon

often I am allowed these messages
as if the field could compose
that which arrives
out of nothing

everlasting proposition of sound

ASSERTED ABUNDANCE

The traitors' handclaps were installed in the cubby of cloistered responses, meanwhile the statue of good deeds shone in the courtyard of the righteous. It seemed here was a dialogue to mend fences and span altered waters. Although religion had no place among the heretical claims of physical prodigies, its stamp authenticated the activities going on through years of cataclysm.

Who was going to end this discourse? Was a question very much on the bystanders' downtrodden faces and whitewashed spirit. So each was met with a ritual sacrifice, but still blood flowed with what seemed an immeasurable abundance from an unseen mover, and the accounts varied — even if the final tally remained odd.

Poetry like a proscription was nailed to the blood rostra of new promise, as a single slender green sprout was recorded to have asserted itself in the crack of granite at the base of the old municipal building, where all roads led from. Some sucker growth of enthusiasm — stubborn and useless.

Recorded also, that its tenacious effort paled and the hordes were left to their spading, breaking macadam for food beneath the surface of the indifferent state. If ever a butterfly or songbird was reported to have passed by, its arc was spread by word of mouth. So that the rumor of such marvel remained stitched in the seams of the workers' ragged overclothes.

PSALM

No one lives there

X and delirium

– barely wider

than a sun

How many greater

than ourselves

is air

Feed the candle

the gate

and your house

PHILIP GOOD

READER, A BETTER MOMENT

Many of the fears
Are finished as
Unanswerable questions bring
Tears
And the mind takes a walk
In early evening thinking air
Until purple balloons
Brought to bed
Allow the flowers to
Rearrange themselves
As poet sees new colors
In liquid or otherwise
And flowers move from
Milk bottle to stone
Objects cared for
Not bought or stolen
Before aesthetics

IN OUR INDOOR OUTDOOR CAFE

Don't look back
As her steps take her closer
To what puts distance between us
Flight 336 arrives
The next day
Making it through lightning
And another mysterious broken coffee machine
Forget about no more southern thoughts
It's alive and well she informs me
With a passionate kiss
In an airport terminal
A something else is communicated as well
And here approaches another holiday

CUTTER

What sense a moth
Has to find its way
Out of a worm in
This funny world of
Change and stay the
Same along the way
So many kinds one
I've seen before flew
Toward my right
Eye and one I've never
Seen reminded me
Of a dead friend who
Tried to ease
pain and became
Somewhere else

EMILY GREENLEY

NOSTALGIA

The general shape of a fern leaf
and ideas about architecture

Are like a letter to an ancient suitor
written later, at an outdoor table:

The problem of getting old at twenty-two,
or understanding or accepting death,

In a sort of stream of images,
when rarely a sensation of emptiness

Comes out in tears by inversion
to a sensation of happy suffering

And then it is more accurate to die
in the enjoyment of a symphony.

PET

Who hasn't heard of my old sorrow
which could be shown in the form of "pet":

I am afraid it isn't a youthful rabbit
that follows in the way of snakes

& as it runs out always smelling danger
we see it hiding in my clothes.

Rabbit, bunny, accidental love-word
attaches itself to my hand as "bite":

Pet in the form of an actor of low drama
runs around as if a word can't hold you.

CULTURE

The unbelievably pretty ladies
had a good bit of luck

That were born with a body
that would accommodate fucks;

Some have a catalogue of scents
or a cache of gems

Visible to cultured men,
and the hair of a kitten,
and the smooth lips of a blue dolphin.

TWO-STEP

if you're going to
turn take me too
walk in the season,
walk in places

a landscape is obvious
by itself
in a contest
with unknown sights

if you're leaving here
help me out of it
it's early enough
and I'm not just talking

when do you say
all this land is cleared
between us is a tract
some say, a contract

by the way
a girl gives a flower
to a man as
a gesture from her hand

JESSICA GRIM

UNTITLED

1.

sky stays dark and — only dark
casting the infinite american net

as long as the trigger finger stays cocked

doing another part of the body
under clouds

my foot does not feel the wetness
of the biography
at hand

claw crawls on its own across my path
who'd have thought
the storm would bring your pulse up so

bending
down low to
have a look at the sky

“the air was full of startled birds”

as if a book
on the windowsill of the invitation

a form of self, relaxed out
towards another person

where the cause meets its year or two
of phrasing

the unforgettable blade category

purifying the disaster
where it walks

2.

leaves filter down through thick air

mention of daylight

within your head

the room as a vibration

and as a name

when people have gone and

the sinuses are dry

without you

sweet because they are rare

surely somewhere between the window

figment administration

words at play

sniper flap on tugboat

lake storm

queer sound of nothing at all

cataclysmic normalcy

in bed with signature

a writing is always tilted in towards itself

as significantly as it can do

UNTITLED

Please forward your desire

hum of spring nouns

appreciably links skin

whenever they can't
 the emotion triggers
 plumage tipped in

"looking at my footage for the first time"

the father of my same . . .
 "your life is your job" okay
 fearless day
 where blossoms stand
 brave new brave new world

if there is meaning
 in the house

 pronoun cement
 "this is after"

let's just say we put it in their hands

drops (fall) straight down
 within an already accepted
 world

sub-biographical
 briefly revealed

so each

posed semantics
 shuts himself in

leaning over towards yourself
 however sweetly

where they talked they left tracks

jointly
as for the humid continue
on auto

bed clothes bring
childhood into line

roots don't touch the windowframe
of it

simply in the house

wherever you are
mowing your field indigent
flesh of the world
in its girth

they're waiting for the weather or
anything that moves

then, uncapped, to you

explosive domestic paralysis
(entertainment *attached* to the body)
bites writing

as inevitable as film

variation intimates
surreal cause vacation
in the pond

upturned, sugary generator
clicks on

nears the south politically
nubile syntax denial

as early as it is warm

obviously, it is
 summertime
the same
 turn of phrase

terra firma absentia
 canopy
unrolls its cuffs
clings to
pockets of regret
 turned out

TERREL HALE

Love's modicum of hieroglyph fosters
but the business of emotion in white
snarling of weightless angel since hers
are cloudy predispositions of light

I shall not tie the dual mock, the wait
to evening angel of the dark is but
shadow and tenuously tries too late
to free the flesh from sorry fate, so cut

illusion fostering the nothing myth
"You don't have a corner on dreams," I say
to Dionysos in black chinos with
all variety of stellas and clay

my publicity saint is a groom, meshed
in the bright counterfeit business request.

September 9, 1991

“You get little asides,” I said, “ennui,
some bravado in the classifieds” perched
against the conversation in what we
made tantamount to leaving physics lurched

to the cantabile, a segment must
a stanch memorize to name, to sequelled
direction, to the one more bright earnest
pause chiaroscuro talked at? compelled

the aftermath the illusion giving
strong pediments of direction light took
and gave away in the follicled sting
of memory, reclaiming with just look

while the violence claims others to somewhere
as terrible as foreign sky or air.

September 10, 1991

MARK HAMMER

IRIS

for John Wieners

only too frequently
does frozen
enigma coagulate
otherness, i've
lately re
fused all in
quiry,
willed the
horizon to
bleed on
command that
so often tears
wings
from the gypsy
moth

the meaning:

testify to way
ward hypocrisy
don't swim in it

IRIS

light oscillates through
iris the yellow wall
paper only distant
as dust or notes
touching the chameleon
& if it disappears, *the*
long skepticism into which
we've fallen, to
be found again outside these
walls varied, yes
we destroy ourselves not
seeing not finality not
torn extremities not
wires;

(Robin Blaser)

soul

hand

word

eye

JEFFERSON HANSEN

CLEAR CUTTING

We could more than
this set up. If I did that
then you asked for a source
of. Her letter arrived at
the moment you thought for.
She remains a key to our
plan, though she doesn't know
it. "Hell, she'd laugh, right?" We
dug through drawers for the
rule book about. Onions and garlic
sizzle, burn through our residence
in. We await her visit
on her own. Think of
several added spins. Think of
an arrangement for. There is always
more or less than. The rest
guile, supple. Churn it around.
Assume you have a part in
her thing. Me too. Much
may come of observing
the interweaving forms. This
living is a gas, more
wily than. Anticipation
provokes an attitude toward.
We are more than buffeted
by. Your fingers stretching
beyond skin. We have
placed it at the moment of.
Recall what worked when. Figures
from a history paraded before.
How does that ensemble meet
and join with? You are ready
now, my townspeople, for this.
Both more and less. Remember the
packages of evening news. It worked
there if not here, always. The

greatest certitude in timed,
 passive ritual. Their experts
 will comfort it for. Go now,
 just you and me and her
 and the poll. We dazzle.
 The mud made pure, precise.

MECHANISMS OF THE CONDITIONAL

A craft, a dodge, you
 'get something off my chest'.
 I listen for fluidity,
 a home in this floor plan.
 Anticipate. *A discussion like
 the guy fixing his car by using
 the official book.* This simile
 offers a rough model for
 a bird's eye view of the
 proceedings. Fixing a sliver
 of possibility toward a mechanism,
 you. Consider and discard several
 alternatives, gear for the least
 rancor or, positively, well-oiled
 motion around the givens.
 'You pulled the ground from
 under me.' Politeness developed through
 compassion, not adherence to whim-like
 principles. No guide but
 your guile, developed through 'hard
 knocks'. It has to do
 with pleasure, with the play
 of children in shallow water.
 Throw no wrenches, if you
 can. A lightning of
 developed grace, touch a
 lamp at the precise moment.
 Exhaustion. Violence. Telephones ring.

NOTES ON AVOIDING A QUARREL

The tricks of last night's
try out. They didn't like us.
We celebrated, what the hell, until
a fog flickers: not spatial, *focal*.
Hair suffers a let down. We
bring together this chorus,
switching to cacophony
unknowingly. An added attraction:
We walk in the rain. I caught
you dancing idiosyncratically
in the kitchen. They say
we laugh too much, as if
seriousness was an end in itself.
Notes for Monday: look up magazine,
get access to the printer, send out
flyers. *"How much
time wasted adjusting
positioning? More efficient
than honest?"* Forget it!
Live by simple truisms.
This trick, this vanguard, a disabling
device for two. Candlelight. Canned tomatoes.

JOHN HIGH

FROM *DESIRE NOTEBOOKS*

#23 & 24

Dear You,

I believe we have all sinned against this before: a flat blue sky flying into the passage of a crossing by the open water, one presented as tracks to any untold memory. I had to come into his letter for the song it offered – & for the way your face *does* outline the landscape you've both entered now. Wish I had some suggestions. The gray-white expanse of an unpopulated history of birds the two of you once called yourselves by? Their semblance to angels? Or this white page filling without your words. The creek & camp leading to a red river & then into a smaller beige wash of waves – or, mouth you might say – that goes on into the sea that finds us occasionally mournful. You. Is the place in your mind calmer? Skirting around the nowadays of any life. Is that what you would tell me now if you were here instead of in the story with him, walking toward the ending of a plot that can't be revised because it can't be unfaithful to itself?

The black-breasted crow perched above the temple's gold dome over there, by the fence of that deserted farm house. I suspect there are others who are fleeing, but into that which they flee we have no jurisdiction. Not in the writing, nor that which we preserve by way of listening, gazing across the worlds that ferry outward toward the bird's rising black wings in the image of a highway. Look at the way he follows behind you today. A rather quiet & patient man even you & your crow might agree. That creek, then the river, finally the northern sea. Or, the two children running back toward the suspense of an airport surrounded by soldiers who are ready to do the bidding of whoever it is proving themselves the strongest in this season.

You,

Excuse my interruption. *That you are with us*, he hears you say to the angel while gesturing, continuously gesturing to the crow's shadowed wings floating upward between the four crosses of the

church. (What harm would it do to take his hand?) In this countryside too, you both go on. In this country too.

Cities, journeys, desire. Well then. The way the drawing of your face in the 6th chapter of the notebooks reminds him (as well as me) of the unmitigated sin & unforgotten sun you've come to. That you've seen it though, is what matters. Sense its motion & mortal presence precisely by its temporal heat, its fecund smell of renewal in the white stones of the old town's cemetery. Standing by the side of the deserted highway he glimpses the frame of eyes which have always alluded while embracing each of your desires for one another. The ghostboy with ashes on his breath. What we sometimes call, *angels*. Has all vanished since he wonders, as the two of you wander – the clothes vanished, your bonded speech vanished, this ghostboy himself with ashes covering his lungs, vanished? He wants to touch you still. He sees the breasts decay & wants to touch them still.

It seems the crow has centered its gravity in the visible, as your tan face has turned itself to these uncharted images of exile. Not time but the immeasurable landscape in the distance has required this change. (Here at the desk it's cool & shadowed. The writing does what it wants. What devices of love though? Which ones will endure you?) The harsh squawking from the crow's beak. The boy speaking through its beak, yet this too has alluded translation, though not emotion. Then the sun almost too bright to imagine outside the already lost motion of your four legs walking across the corn field.

– Across the gardens & so we enter. The prophet's words?
You,

You repeat these words slowly but only to yourself, listening carefully for any sign of closure. Are there none? Have none been given, none acquired? Then all we can hear is the floating sound of automobiles rushing toward the future

L.

J. High, 6/8, Moscow

#33

Then one day the tv man came & repaired the tv.

The next day the telephone man arrived & reconnected the line.

No one asked why these things happened. They were simple brilliant signs.

But everywhere on the streets they spoke of God.

NICOLE HOELLE

ODE TO A POEM

I have no time for the exclamation
written into rain.
I am taken
your rambunctious form
yelps its level to mine
stinks up vowels
tries to digest and announce the dead.
Me, I am sheltered smarts of sounds
that go unheard
replaced by this lettering of oceans
miming the little beast
specked across
all other beasts, I am
harped on
all the time you wave and pout
mix your disabled howl.

Filling my nooks
with the dead
their wince
crumpled to the ready black.
Illegible skies
leave me to run the rancid
rush faces
alone
bury them with my monster
bury them with the music of all monsters.

STRANDED IN YOUR GHOST

Ice cream isn't an issue
Not here
I have laughed
to keep you out,
opening into night
And no one can kill me, not
this night,
the guests are here
the summer people
And in going alone
I must carry this

In the eyes
the rip came

your ghost pulled me along
with its shadow
somehow from our own stooped pit

I live in insertions
having done it all in your hand
in the crease of sound
disturbed
and raw as toast

No one could ever see how perfect
the living room conversation was
not with all this limpid arising,
the loud drain of song,
the decimals of the dying

The season slides downward
in saliva motions
Redoing the night
I say your name with other names

some hidden token
in the orchestra of other places

Banging in the attic
all the dry, bony things
twist into inventions

I have failed to see any reflection you may have
Yours is the only ghost I know.

LISA HOUSTON

VIVID

*

to yield the clean air
penetrates this cloth, this
December muddled tissue

a broken-shoed woman dollops over
the flatness where it rained
we see
weather decanting
inside the body is likely to

* *

Now I am blind. I am
eating a winged letter.
Notions of prayers off the shoulders
swept up, away

You snip at the broken hairs and
by the rush of paper you dowel
into a dream into a canyon.

Not so very western, yet insisting
snow flies forward while around
our backs the wives' tale, a feathery movement
felt in the steepness

JEFF HULL

FROM *BROOD*

across another desert
devoted lake deploys
an exile in nostalgia
running dry

•

errant, a dark moon
suffering relation
this bird thread
unravels arrest

drunk from your cup
now it's out of sight
an old light
frames this dissemblance

•

in the pit of a pang
pinned by no-weight
back from resilience
the drag of figuration

GEOFFREY JACQUES

ARS POETICA

*"when you hear music after it's over
it's gone
in the air
you can never
capture it again"*

— *Eric Dolphy*

if not where you can see or taste it
I don't know why all the rules should suddenly go topsy-
turvy
& the half-century old standard with its great flakes
& impossibly svelte & desirable ikons
go unheeded as we consider whether to elevate one fragment
over another
in our never-ending search for significance in the fine
print
where — just as luck would have it —
only a precious few can derive any real satisfaction
while the rest of us are left alone to fend for ourselves

INCLUSIVITY

a few days ago a glimpsed river
became a lovely diversion from the room's smudged walls
its faces searching for a path to the cloud's horizon

you should know the difference by now
— how someone will let you peek into a hideaway
while your desire remains stubbornly elusive
& even though it resembles a performance
the distinction remains between memories —

like the way recycled ideas are appreciated
appearing like something we once owned
while around us erupt dreams of orange blossoms
& a shower of ready-to-eat raisins

•

searching in those out of the way places is a mixed
blessing
even though what's there once mattered
a day trip to the old white-washed walls & gilded
canyons
provides fewer answers than a marmalade jar
or a slight hint of morning haze
followed by afternoon sunshine with a chance of
precipitation

•

so we return again to the two familiar rooms
where this tight lipped bunch is admirably tolerant
just as I am

& though I realized later that I needn't have dressed
it helped anyway — just as writing did — in putting the
movie together
it also helped that someone liked
the names dropped in the course of the morning

LISA JARNOT

THE TONY POEMS

Tony,

speaking to this normal tendency to drift
and surely when a poor devil is such

in stirs of river silt
ere drowning,

a clear print soon emerges
that you are not blonde

and they are of our tradition
short of actual

corruption, sir
resulting in a deformation

that the iota after alpha
begins to be neglected

sporadic over the whole body
in twenty-seven letters of fixation.

Tony,

Maintaining the attitude of a bystander
in a town like this
is no easy task.

The condition or fact of being monstrous
occurs, weighs heavy,
lifts the lotus wine
preserving sleepless nights.

I have no expectation
when in songs in praise of love
this garden comes to form
and he who giveth credit go out cheated.

To sing the same refrain –
This is my treaty of friendship
or the point that action tends to.

Tony, (another Tony)

It is the oldest wooden building in the world,
under the auspices of neighborly relations
where we would find some small counter-measure
against calamity.

More power to the greatest of miseries,
that simple freaks enrealm a dozen revivals
of the religious sort, whistling dixie or
down in front you dumb fuck!

However, events also known as the
weirdest trees in 14 miles, a free
car wash, and lucite gifts – that's
what you need, he said.

On the square of sacred jesus christ
indeed or crossing pridesmouth,
you can find me in the tented field house
on my knees.

Tony,

This is the last letter.

Honor is the easiest
to walk away from,

speculation, shadows,
and your face

are not.

The root of a word is
it rains lightly

the actual circumstance
he stretched himself and breathed.

About this affair
i will someday reply

to meet by day
what night would have inhabit.

MARGARET JOHNSON

FALLING OUT OF FAITH OR BELIEF

a person imagines victory
but children and singing are loveable

passing by as if amazed women become desperate
when she says it's time for me
and I fall out of fear or belief

•

falling out of fear or belief
collection of words makes an inventory
so they weren't famous either
you can go there, even for justice
a minute like a walk in the woods
easier now afraid to say
I was wearing my hat
the children running across the street
all of your enormous arms fail and soon you encounter
memory often better than reality
some not eager to climb
the best of a few
this could be the process of grace
tired of discontent and complaint

•

clothes on the line the neighbor of despair
calls back in the afternoon

passing by as if time as if amazed
when it's fear you say
when she says it's time for me
to hold anything is artifice
and it seemed as if they had always been old

I wish we had gone the wrong way up the street
and Tom leads us to the square in the book
but we can't find the key although he thinks he
sees the window and we enter the wrong bookstore

the original blasphemers sit on their hands later
because they've made all the mischief they can

•

politics leaks out into the streets
where some of the families are
if you had a word you would probably want to say more
I'd rather be talking about movies or ghosts
you can't even trust the cats in this room
who like the birds and the children aren't ever owned

a person imagines all kinds of things
but a child can't be talked out of fear

an artist walks around and around the chair
in order to see truth
we have to be remembered and reminded

imagine hope she says
the children in context

the right amount of time to be separate
often doesn't come
it's hard to imagine a first part, or a cause, or a relief
the endless parent runs across the ground
now you find the key to the map, the unlocked door
I can't help it that the map is always opening outwards
but the rivers are not blood
and they bring you to a different home

ANDREW JORON

THE READING LAMP

1.

“For there is no System, no integument of Sentiment or the
Passions, which we do not inhabit as we would an abandoned
Ruin.”

(spoken by the Poe-simulacrum at the Pan-Lunar exhibition)

2.

Who believes that houses are
Transfigurations of the trees?

This visible beam

supports not the Ideal world

3.

Dear author, what is preferable
to the line's stillness-in-motion?

Being the verb's
Refusal to decline

Reptilian sheen of the unwritten page

4.

Fix the ceiling
“to name the Unnameable”

Drive home
the eyes' slippery nails

— does the horizon approach?

5.

Transparently attired, the senses [. . .]

fold primes (?) as a narrative
locates

You must wear these insignia of doubt & cunning

6.
It is the pathway of the ghost-particle
It is a composition "for violin, flute and echo"

where
On a uniform surface
to inflict the wound?

7.
neither endpoint nor origin
But an indrawn breath
That mirrors
collapsing space

No symbolism is possible in this
Bare interior
the substance cannot rest
Within itself: Becoming its own question

8.
The cataract-cry
Pass'd through black teeth – *Tekeli-li?*
an infernal
Paradise that skinless Landscape

9.
If it is the custom of water
to form, even in weightlessness
(simple) collectivities
unlike *memory*: unlike *desire*
How, then, to explain this miraculous cup
This cylinder
Of absence
within the undifferentiated body?

10.
historia: the womb's migration
Turned inside out? – "All Equations Are Lesion's Equal"
Automatism
Dilates a learned response

GEORGE KALAMARAS

ELEGY FOR AN UNKNOWN WAITRESS IN AN AIRPORT BAR

To even consider being
someone else hurts as much as the thought of being only me.
Whatever hand I have left, the cup has gone cold.
The waitress from across the room
drifts by like silk
lightning with a limp of rain.
Tilts her head with the attitude of water.
With the indifference of a bottle
dampening in the warm clutch of a stranger.
Cinnabar slips to forms more solid.
I stamp a bramble of wormwood in my tea the taste in my mouth
is something like silver
bowing shyly among cases of gold
something like having your fingers on an unfamiliar breast
told by a pace of breathing
they are wrong.

“Don’t forget to give her a little tongue now
and then.”
To hold the vowel in pure shifting
silence
means more to me than monk or mouth.
Stillness is a perfect food, even in the wall
of one’s work, even in a watery braid
trailing behind a stranger like a word
not yet used to its own sound,
a quiet found on the borders of small Western towns
secretly rearranging themselves in the dark
into buildings vacant lots a cut
of glass maps my face knows
the drift of moving midnight
in someone’s scent of sleep.

To consider, even, the taste of someone’s salt
I rise above trees I am not an airplane I am
not a man or woman I rise a little

down into myself as if coming
home from a long life, as if into a bowl
of porridge from a skull of white fleece.
Mice I see
only mice but air
sizzling with either dawn
or dread. As if finally coming into the sound of one's groin
with a lift of harps. I am in from the old
ways of talking, in from the yes and no
and the maybe come-on-over-on-Saturday-
sometime-after-eight, into the scent of gas
lamps, lamps of fire and golden wheels
of silence rotating in the spine. Will the world ever ether
down to hold all that limps all that
struggles to pronounce its own leg
all that strays the terminal in search of pretzels and beer
any (if not all) that looks into you
from across the room as if you were
a mirror of their own
design, a choosing of family, say, but you're not I'm not
ever that way when words gather like cold teeth
straighten and lock
someone's eyes bluer than any brown could ever be.

"And in the evening give her a fluid
orange with a mint of lemon a baby sparrow."

On my tongue

that long purple feather Federico tasted
in the moist Andalusian lair, in the shotgun
flight of sparrows, in a lonely rag
scraped across the amphibious groin of a stranger,
in somebody's warning left unheard
on a green park bench with the peeling light
of Paris still clinging to his suit.

To even consider drinking cut glass
places the tongue in an awful state of panic.
The seeds rise up erect and full of forgotten resin.
The owl in your chest suddenly spills with blood.
The breath in your pants tightens with shame.
Your hands stop growing as if dark combs caught your tongue.
But the hair turns inward
in a filling of family, bringing to the brain

unarranged electrons from the ether.
But the eyes go soft as Hindu pearls
around the wrist of someone you watch
across the room delicately
wiping tables in a hobbling light
that falls into her
hair darkening
it more like rain.

JULIE KALENDEK

MAKE, FOR H.

As we seem to begin
a Victorian privacy
persuades me.
I prowl the edges
of the scene.
I read the poems
of a beautiful woman.
She is a god at love.
I drink til I am sick.
I cannot find myself there.
When she really did go blind
he married her.
I consider the geography
of your need.

•

As we seem to begin
a vague repeating
is the highest form of order
I am capable of seeing.
You are fascinated by my
least favorite part.
I bleed the next morning
with gratitude
for such poised comprehension.
A chord strikes me
to distraction.
My better is not mine.
Time forces this hunger
for the indiscreet and

•

as we seem to begin
 my attraction proves
 flawed by conceit.
 I am bound to disagree.
 The heroine is introduced
 to shame me with
 her impeccable pedigree.
 She comes between the pen
 the page and the sheets.
 My scrawl cannot elucidate
 this incidental mixture
 or fix a point
 beyond the cure
 of contact.

•

As we seem to begin
 it is nineteen ninety-two
 and no particular
 day of the week.
 I can't arouse a single hope
 from the impure line.
 I study the bruise
 you left in the dark.
 The shape is a sound
 is an island
 is a start
 of release.
 And word can prevent nothing
 hung from the framework of belief.

RETRACTION

The language, which grew too much inward
was supplanted by a vocabulary of custom.
The transparent gift of roses.
An ornate dance of obscure origin.
The finely hand-wrought chain.
Perhaps strenuous in conception,
but a sometimes delicate relief.

Had we stopped the words
before their engagement as weapons
in a civilization of machinery,
had we reflected to some degree —
was it better to have a boy
look up to you or down your shirt,
look down on you or up your skirt?

And there is violence in accountability,
there are checkered feelings.
Days like weeks and weeks like hours.
Small yet visible jerks of pleasure.
Where to place the hands so as not
to harm the form. Movements of the tongue
which once aided speech.
No one defined those acts.
No one thought to subtract
an absence of fidelity.

Our choices are laid out in rows.
What a surprise when the woman declines
and is vicious, but reclined
at the appropriate angle.
As if she were taking gifts
and knowing it. As if strength
were never a response to brutality.

One other confidential discourse —
what made me assume an exchange?
My work on your behalf
comprises an addiction.

And though you take great pains
to spend toward your need,
it is a woman I would take like a child
in my arms, it is a woman's obedience
confused with an impulse to console.

It is a cycle of release.
It is fatigue coupled with distraction
that raises a screen against
the minuscule facts of desire.
Men will multiply to fill the space.
Men will vacillate.
It is an irony cultivated entirely
in the deep grasses
forgotten among the blades,
where what can only crawl
is invisible and increasing.
As so many stones make sense
having broken from the earth.

A chemical flavored courtship
foretells intrusive ways.
A heart which serves these primitive conventions
must vary with space.

GARY KEENAN

CODA

I'm covering the creases of my palms
with clay gloves. If you insist we touch

they'll fissure, so let's simply salute
a common narcissism and proceed

with the destruction of this hour's dance,
fixing the limits of intent and loss

with eyes cast left and hands that signify
eclipse. Yesterday I watered sunlight

instead of the swedish ivy. Why not,
I thought, no one's looking. But sharing this,

I begin to blame you, so eagerly
confirming my fear of human nature

with a nod, a co-conspirator's smile.
The mind contstrues the skin about the eyes

as semaphores fluttering when we sleep.
I know – I watched you sleep last night

and counted out the code to all your dreams.
Not much to report, the cipher's safe.

But more than once your hand moved up your leg,
peripheral fears demanding you shield

your focus. So much wisdom, such thin arms!
Yes, I could dress with lots more *savoir faire*.

And our correspondence, its insistent manner,
inflames my desire for less wholesome terms.

I leave them to you. Measure your feelings
against those relics: “hot jazz,” “sachertorte,”

“flux.” We both thought every word worth saying
would cohere until there was between us

a third being, the sum of all we felt.
Light falls on a plate of persimmons

and leeks. I search for gradations of heat
in your face, in the air pressing my hand.

JOHN KEENE

CLEANSING, THROUGH THE ART OF REMEMBERING, A RENEWAL

Picnics swarmed those summers as fervidly as bees, though he feigned to ignore the insects unless they graced him with a sting. Wasps and garter snakes comprised a different cohort, sending you screaming through the screen door in out of the dark. “La Ba-Kair.” To salve a yellowjacket sting his mother would apply baking soda. In essence she was redrawing the surface of his lovemap. Certain sensations are unrenderable in sequential terms. Even animals recognize this. Towards the end of May the city would show its wares before the river like a tired, forsaken bride. This entails a “localized” notion of the subject. The two aunts, which is what we also called close female family friends, resided in the Laclede Town Houses, where Damie used to keep her beauty shop. Whether these still present advisable housing options no longer remains in doubt. Analysis involves a subtler mode of seeing. Chestnut Valley Sound. It was assumed that they would eventually own property like the TV families, though no one had taken account of the difficulties involved in obtaining a mortgage. By then the white flight had begun though there was almost no *de jure* desegregation. William Greenleaf Eliot. During the weeks leading up to the Fourth-of-July, they drove all day to Grand Rapids, where he imagined the ground wore a purple shawl of lilacs. There, the earth lay parched and bare, yet you remember more the orderly grid of streets. The trellis of names of Gandy’s relatives climbed bewilderingly before us, so we reconstructed each sibling’s relation on a daily basis. A Golden Gloves boxer, an amateur star. Who knew what to make of the other grandmother’s people, whose aloofness we took for granted. Vain vacuity. At first he would squirm in the barber’s chair, lest they inflict on him another Quo Vadis, but as he aged he learned to appreciate the focused attention. The coolest picks flaunted their power-fist end, because they could not stay corralled in a pocket. “Well, how do I look?” knowing that no one with any decency would answer. The desire to be seen was an attempt to escape alterity, or in other words, to shift from the margins to the center. One is often prone to reduce such situations to the result of “life-

style choices." He seeks without finding and he writes alone. Afro-sheen, Congo Queen. If he has to then he ought to, but he needn't. One learned not to slam the oven door since the cake inside would fall, and to wash one's hand with vigor before sitting down to table. Daddy would buy pizza since he could not cook, though by seven Jeffrey was handy with flapjacks. The effect is essentially novelistic. Summer itself was often not a strong enough attractor, so they adorned it with a garland of festivals. At the Strassenfest and the Oktoberfest, which was smaller, couples traded leers and melodies while waltzing about in lederhosen. The air cast aloft a clear ribbon of beer. *Raus, Sie kleine Mäuser, raus.* Juneteenth, crowning the torrid months, when the scions of the former slaves celebrated their battle for freedom. "Gonna pick me up some loving down at the corner store," sung with an urgency that others could not fail to hear. Intuition, information, an index of being. Lacking any concept of the "body" beyond its being the locus of received sensations, his self-esteem derived mainly from what others identified in him physically. In your case your hair was never considered completely "good," which was why she quickly picked your friend instead. He hid but they quit the game so no one came seeking. The problem is one of choosing. Daddy was always eager to play catch, since he felt a son expected this from a loving, caring father. A confidence that soared and glove-hand that fell, still there was no baseball near either. Your trunk was brimming with daggers of vengeance, yet you concealed this to forestall any bloodshed. Duplicity has killed more Black men than gin. In a southpaw, what they appreciate most is this sort of "live arm." From his mouth words rushed like richly fed rapids, leaving him ever vulnerable to ascription.

KAREN KELLEY

FRAGMENT 2:5

lift up his shirt, tell him not to worry (leaning out window laughing, talking).

my hands through his hair, thick, black. want to wipe his face — he's nodding yes.

inexplicable image of a drink of milk olives have soaked in — oil rolling on top.

large map, lots of marks on it — places to go. the moment he seemed somehow threatening “behind” us — as if the pulldown space of a station wagon.

see words in the air as if reading his mind. see DRESS and find beautiful white one (spaghetti straps and sweetheart bodice I think will fit — touching cups, lightly lined).

see SEX. sight as I read it of pools in a grotto. climbing (jumping actually) over many looking for one I want.

we're on the edge — deep, not particularly clean (black leaves on bottom, walls yellowed, broken) — and he says something about a young girl's hair (representing innocence) (on my head).

he's swimming in the river — I'm swimming (shot as if from a high window). don't know where we're going (shot in the river, water at bottom of frame (shoulders) and he's far ahead —)

(*alternate*: trying to talk softly and avert my face. averted, he doesn't spot me — I've made myself inaccessible. on a dirt road with a branch held before my face and thumb in my mouth simultaneously).

relatively sure of role — putting on makeup, throwing my clothes aside and wondering how I'll find them again.

no white powder for my face. some undies — want dark ones, not light.

look up and his hand fills in for me (fills empty contour) (equals

sexual spark). shot as he opens screen door to go out, frame of his head and all one can see behind water.

aware our pants are undone like books of recipes.

afternoon: floor badly tilted — strain to get up other side (to other side of house). chairs pushed together, no couches. trying to make out where we are, but don't get any "traction," can't get sight to resonate.

when he suggests putting his fingers in my mouth shells materialize in my pocket, one ragged-edged.

can't help thinking: *I'm fascinated by objects*. my dress dark with thick red stripe down middle.

flying propped up on couch pillow (under my belly).

I do this (fly) by wishing.

trouble gaining height.

RANDOM TRANSLATION: REASON WILL NOT
HELP YOU. IF FLOATING OVER TREETOPS IS A
GREAT WORK OF HEART, IT WILL SUSTAIN A
MELODY THROUGH TUNNELS, WINDOWS, AND
THE NIGHT. IF NOT, MIND WILL ROLL BACK
FROM THE HORIZON FOREVER . . . I (NEVER)
(ALWAYS) CONTRADICT MYSELF. THE SONG
FLUCTUATES. ALL STATEMENTS ARE PERFECT.

as (he suggests putting his fingers in my mouth) (talking on the screened porch) (pulling down jeans) WE APPEAR AS 3D OBJECTS.

bewildered, then say, *Oh, I know*.

(sole of my foot).

(in back yard to take off).

STABILIZE.

images slightly below the surface, creating a divot.

floor plan like a moment I can't remember

SEAN KILLIAN

ANGELUS NOVUS

Illusion,
charged with grace,
denies everything
but awkwardness.
We all feel real
but then we stumble on
a din of suspicious clouds,
a mockery of thunder
far above 1) our future
2) our desire and 3) our crippling.
Another moon hangs
in a dancer's balance
but we can only commend the attempt.
And when we read our own
thoughts, we know
mindreading is more
shabby than crystalline,
or more cracked than clear.
Even night seems to have
a weight to it,
pulling us into an
incessant Punch-and-Judy show
where delicious adjustment is a blow-by-blow.
Shit! I thought you were merciful
but when I saw you change your
clothes, I realized you were
my interpretation of
a basic flesh, ballast
for this world but not for the next.
If there is one, you chortle,
beautiful damsel on the make,
ready to be an actress
before the wall of today.
Lucidity, transparency are
our trappings; we're only furnished
to burn clear of the sun

and become babies of distant stars.
 Discontinuous footsteps don't matter –
 there's always a sequel
 if money's made from the original.
 Affording us only rites, dreams don't
 matter but we find them
 out, we ritualize them, they baffle us again.
 We show our ghosts to the door,
 nothing in excess but our
 charming fear. But the fact that we
 fortify what we must defend just goes to show
 you can't drink, eat or shit enough.
 Without hope but for the cannon of your heart?
 Cannonfodder is too studied to move freely –
 you have to shoot it out, shooting the breeze all the while.
 There is no one clue that will ask us into a solution,
 and no one life that will leave us utterly clear, oracular,
 effortless. Everything is desperate and open-shut.

Elusive but persuasive attention
 will show us that our faces
 are to the refuse, and our
 feelings point at debris and
 our nerves serve-up more crap.
 We will not paint our eyes shut
 but they are open-shut cases
 that hardly need trying – doom
 won't hurt but pulling
 the tooth of truth makes
 the angel look us in the eyes.
 There is nothing else to pay
 but attention, and it's
 a lot. History and battle and collection
 belong to the has-beens;
 wind that blows from there
 stinks, by the way – give
 me the gracious figments of
 your ex- and ex- and ex- minds –
 the future, brainless,
 needs no fending-for
 and yesterday is the place
 you fail to mention,
 the time you deliberately
 have never acknowledged, in case

it traps you and sweeps you offstage,
 clearly no impossibility.
 The backward angel of
 Walter Benjamin is
 blowing-by, its
 back to the future,
 its eyes looking
 on our little sanity —
 into the breach, it backs,
 and we feel like we're
 being attacked by a leaving
 angel whose last goodbye
 charges us with falling apart gracefully,
 with leaving a few ramparts, a
 few crumbs. However we find our dreams,
 we find them being brave.
 Having come through one
 more covertly-theatrical day,
 we feel lost and saved, found and forgotten.
 It all storms by — how the hearts wreck
 but would wish no more. Paradise
 is an anxious rally of the pulse
 but we're left touching the smoke of word,
 and every blazing virtuosity invents
 the fighter and the pall. In the sere
 competencies of the present, let's see
 if our experiences will express
 prehensile eyes, empty hands,
 ink-obsured desires, ideas picked-up by waysides.
 I'll wait out this incipience.

What I then accept as
 flesh isn't so much
 fled as backlogged, blown
 toward a catalog where stumblers
 can be beside themselves,
 over the goods displayed,
 over the crypts unlidded.
 A register is pierced
 by an almost pleasant scream
 but then we understand
 how far less is given than a word
 lifted past the dead, how
 much less is left than

a word stood on its own —
 we fail selves to
 sleep with the greater
 erasures of a whirring-past,
 the angelic eyes having had their fill
 of what we famish, and what we fool.
 Loose talk, however lucid,
 leaves us no testament
 but a few overblown
 treatises on clay and its clumping.
 I potter about like a potter on last legs;
 I'll hallucinate a border
 where entrancement, most
 sadly, is denied, where debt becomes
 our hands, our feet,
 and suicide, by night, is hardly seen.
 Oh, greatest illusion
 of identity, help us
 when the book's thrown at us,
 when we're arrested and told accurately
 of every transgression, every crossing.
 They say that promise
 once sounded like
 a first, turbulent peal,
 but that now its whoosh is winging it,
 wasting another rainbow on another Noah,
 bestowing another dove above
 every executioner, and another
 terra firma under every correct doubter.
 What, then, at last, vanishes
 voices only my illusion
 that I or anyone could have been graceful.
 Backward, we're blown, broken over every
 delapidation, every done-in sphinx.
 Passion is the denial of this cold regress.
 But do you have the courage to be passionate?
 After all, knowing everything is here at hand,
 and endlessly lost, dropped;
 to be delivered is to nail a door
 with the twin flames of good and evil —
 my own two eyes naked hammerers of where they've been.

MYUNG MI KIM

FROM ANNA O ADDENDUM

... she no longer conjugated verbs and eventually used only infinitives, for the most part incorrectly formed from weak past participles ... and she omitted both the definite and indefinite articles. In the process of time she became almost entirely deprived of words.

“Fräulein Anna O”
Studies on Hysteria
Breuer/Freud

Pole stricken mulishly copy

Scribe ion order

When fury

To full sum

Summon deluge

Come now and hear

Picture more at variance

Augment morning arriving ensnare

Records civil

Recourse stir sterile jar fir

Can't see the rain or the plow

Unwarranted tended

Privation gnarled

Lost conversations

Motion under compulsion

Written successive growth and decay

Its sticky saltiness

Destroyed taken over the page

That history told

Blows and thirst

ROBERT KOCIK

INFORMAVORE

celebratory so unlike handing you the cars as you board

the immaterial side of supply

that art thou — in the manufactured sense

that art though that making undo labors

•

that habit alarm

use be only ever

initial trespass

•

in wanting only to live second wind left to the first

•

destroyed as things insofar as they have become
IS THE COFFEE SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS
things

uneventfulness of sacrosunk, that making be
all the violence we need utility severed from reason
a nonroom in the center of the head cannot be restored
neverwas soundness which poetry overdoes

•

or shoring
FALSEWORK

tempo rare required in the making of permant
tale of the lives which do not make it
no mind in end
literally manual manually illiterate
indirect drive pressureless sinter
these things which do not await

•

Where the eye would have watched itself assemble
the way the hand feels itself if it touches
Taking a line back through the pile of shavings to
the point at which millions of handiwork's
years reduce to a number of easy steps

DAMON KRUKOWSKI

FROM *DAYS, AND DAYS*

sometimes plagiarized from Thoreau's Journals

*The more he leaves his work, the more usable it becomes
(room in it for others). — John Cage*

I am only introduced once again to myself. — Thoreau

It would be well if we saw ourselves as in perspective always,
impressed with distinct outline on the sky, side by side with the
shrubs on the river's brim.

We steal noiselessly down the stream.

Our lives are spherical, deformed by stress and accompanied by
the static of anxiety. They would be picturesque, but mean rela-
tions and prejudice intervene to shut out the sky, and we never see
a man as clearly as a weathercock on a steeple.

Any expedition begins thus, in indecision, in a warm, drizzling
rain, in fertile idleness.

•

(Ocean)

Consulting the shoreless, islandless
doesn't seem unlikely or impossible
here in a moment of upheaval
here with my feet on the (wavering)

Wasn't I discussing the sunset?
It led again to my literary research
which crumbling is some kind of
compensation, like fungi, for the ego

Which crumbling like teeth is
I suppose doing its share as well
looking (envious) at the river
inquiring into price differences

•

What is the fit subject for poetry?
“Nestor’s simple repast” or my own
Nibelungeleid in the grass? Deformation –

Compensation – Speculation

“It matters not whither these strains originate”
some liberties there, but still:

The step, step
of my own messenger’s boots

Still too hesitant to *announce*
“But let not the oyster grieve that he has
lost the race; he has gained” *as an oyster*

•

(Sound)

Dear me, it is a load of contradictions
converging on this street corner, oracles
all: the halloo, the whisper. Put off
and listen to their noisy ambiguity.
Strumming those expensive harps
out in fashionably antique boats
they pronounce the *final* word: “He said.”

But this cannot be done into English. Here
in the end of the year all that might have been clever
seems so much salty froth for birds;
soon I will dream of a valley, Eastern
and silent as the end of day . . .

•

Drifting in a day, an emblem of lost identity
I am dissolved

“Each publishes the other’s truth”
in contempt, mean abstention of genius

But here is the teamster, here the roots
of pine – with sang-froid, and nonchalance

The *terra firma* of society

“Why should we concern ourselves with what has hapened to us,
and not with how we have happened, and how the universe has
demeaned itself in consequence?”

There are floating and fabulous
places on no map
and every fat pine is fit for spearing
and every man is a Roman forum

Is it any clearer now? I’m afraid
not – the drifting dissolution
cloudy with salt and other minerals
is unambiguously confused. But science, diminished,

Continues. And all things are up and down,
east and west, to *me*.

•

(Annursnack)

At length we left the river and took to the road which leads to the hilltop, to see if by any means we might spy out what manner of earth we inhabit. East, west, north, and south, one may see how at convenient, eternal intervals men have settled themselves, without thought for the universe. Still the vast impulse of nature breathes over all. Still the crow caws from Nawshawtuct to Annursnack, and in all swamps, the hum of mosquitoes drowns the hum of industry.

•

Linnaeus, setting out for Lapland
taking an insect view of the plain
packs his “comb” and “spare shirt”
“leather breeches” and “gauze cap to keep off gnats”

All the operations seem, for the time,
the single object for which all things tarry

Now walking bravely off – many are there already, thank you,
but when I remember myself I forget them

Dialectic, awake when asleep
“always the *system* shines with uninterrupted light”
no man’s shadow is as large as his body
and as the sun is larger than any
no shadow travels far into space

– Footnote: the soldier is the degenerate hero,
as the priest is the degenerate saint.
And Linnaeus? The sole patron of music . . .

(To wit: whistles to keep his courage up)

•

(Love is the burden of all Nature’s odes)

Corn grows in the night
airplanes land on three delicate points
and are maps of our own more fragile biology
desires come in pairs, usually opposites
so strong in likeness as to remind us of the difference
between those cheerful landings when everyone applauds
and (these are often applauded, too) the end
of flying altogether. Romance is –
what is this rural, this pastoral, this poetical life
but its invention? The song of the birds is an epithalamium
but I learned today (again) that my ornithology
had done me no service.
Love is the burden of all Nature’s odes
corn grows in the night.

NICK LAWRENCE

FROM *THE HAWTHORNE EFFECT, A PLAY ABOUT WORK*

My name sleeps, doubt behind my back	being all ready for the meeting
meeting purpose apart	taken into communion
least rumor is errand in their ways	talking so strangely in the empty air
meaning apart meant	fading into a far-off laughter
scene that they witnessed	some of our community
sight on site	but a name

The mills were our home.

In the spring the light changes

Watch your shrubs and fruit trees after the first snows. Nipped off twigs with ragged edges are signs of deer. Rabbits nip the twigs off cleanly. Stoneflies bask on exposed rocks and tree trunks near open streams about this time of year. Take a walk in the woods and watch for growths of rock polypody fern.

At the blue hour, *l'heure bleu*, when the sky looks like an expensive drink, the traveler makes his or her way through a forest of possible contacts, disregarding them all. Sounds emerge: small sighs from human lungs, longer and louder ones from the lungs of traffic. Footsteps' rapid speech along sidewalks. The barely perceptible hiss of rain on the avenue.

In an office bathroom a secretary vomits, the sound of words, syllables, clauses hitting water. She vomits up her entire vocabulary.

In the middle of his way out to Corporate Woods, a young engineer stops in a bar

Last night I dreamed a sheet of paper was my bedsheet and a book was my pillow, hard but necessary. When I woke (before I really woke) the book was a box and my head was a book.

Exhaustion is our mode round here. If I could work sleeping standing up I would. Work here means looking like you're awake when you're really sleeping.

Harriet thinks she has an infection. She should drink more water. I wish I could stop thinking about sweat. Yesterday they put us on a speedup which they said will continue through the end of the week. It's a minor pleasure to find in Webster's that the words *ravel* and *unravel* can mean the exact same thing.

One of the girls had her scalp torn off when her hair got caught in the loom this morning. This is called getting into your work. New cloth design. Kind of garish. She should put in a patent for a hairloom, something her granddaughter could work at one day. Later I heard a voice in the hall say, Remove all traces of blood



After he woke, he went outside to pick up a paper at the corner drugstore. The air was damp, mild. He unfolded the paper and walked six blocks to the subway, reading and shielding his face from the other pedestrians

Infant Is Caught in Building Plunge
Panel Sees Rise in Poverty if Education Isn't Improved
Drama of the Scene Obscures the Real Issues

Someone else may have the job you want right now but it can be yours in time; start preparing for it. Your absence would be noticed if you miss a meeting, though it would be fun to skip out. Love and money partnerships are the focus. Charm is at a high, but back away if you're pressured, especially in money matters. Another day will do just as well for making commitments. Your travel plans may be scotched by developments early today, but it works out better in the long run. A frightened friend may need legal advice. Go out of your way to help a stranger, even if you're late. Dust off an old idea and put it into action. Do it now.

GE up 1½, Dow up 5 points in brisk trading. Chance of afternoon thunderstorms

ANDREW LEVY

FROM *MYTH OF THE NOT HER BLOOD*

a sort of permanent transparency
fascinated me because I could see myself as the tune

manuscript pages covered with
“question this page”

and my room fossilizes
descendant of continuance

the final adjustments
raised up out of his grave

the night's constellations
the body of the small point

the always unequated remnant
pushing shopcart for bottles & cans

we will visit the sun
of that sentence in my hand

the varicolored joy of our eyes
the sandy witness of your bed
the results of its division
hands full of smooth flesh
so there you are
who held no property
and stretching & yawning
through this industrial wasteland
calm in the circles
perhaps nearly dead
the soft spot
where the silence is
where the simple lights grow
if I move down above
her legs against mine
what solitude I've finally inherited
dark adoration
the place my tongue has found there
in soluable unknown knots of
made new
runs on in my head

moving into the '90s
I thought there was something to their word
I thought I was trying
my vision keeps referring to
your conversation
in forgotten or misplaced rooms
in the sweet darkness
the heavens ceaselessly scan
this is a song in someone's public
emotionality
the beautiful belly
the alternative in the outer shell
the pen dent on thighs composed
a few months obliterate
maybe no luck for a long time
in all the nerves clarify
the kind of light I have in my head
only care for grass or sea
or peace

JOEL LEWIS

MOOD MUSIC

and now the ethnographer
shudders as he details
the tribe's wordless manners.

A sky that's in promise,
the limits of toothsome-ness.

References to the damaged life
wave up from the corners. It's so . . .
. . . neo-Cartesian that I just might
weep into *these* french-fries.

Vatic planks, or so say
the "long-lifers," a back-hand
into events, just as the clothes outlets
spread their hegemony
into the bright counties.

Just not the way, *the Way*, I was taught
it should work, stirred not shaken,
winter in a spoon,
tower shadows in the lobby.

INTERCEPTION

pure daydreaming gropes
towards intuition

with Big Bells in the room
Zurich upon my brow

passersby transform
into good friends

April grows its snow
your tundra / my tundra

I'm thinking on Eric Dolphy
tonight, his horns

my light, & don't give up
that inch for anyone

POPULISM = MELONHEAD

garage roof wobbles
wind goes soft then
flushed, for I am

the guitarist
Charlie Christian
wasn't

My whole life & magnesium

blank Montana from this tower
The coffee beans grow eyes
in the kitchen's shadow

these big deliberate steps

distance twists neighborly

Sum total:
The thesaurus of a derelict.

TONTO'S EXPANDING HEADBAND

What rooms lifted up and what pure
maintenance keeps the engines of North Bergen
rising? Manhattan is a cracked curtain
& its breath-rubbed glass pylons are fixed into
the bedrock. The people I passed were whistling between
random scowls and at the fringe of the lake, a flap
of thunder was the slow flame on a jogger.

I was only the same town from day to day
& was soon among the voice of my failures inside
the blue formica pizzeria. And I *heard* my
fortune cookie fate announced in that cell
of late and brutal money. And this is what
I write out of: a walking life.

TAN LIN

100 SECOND CHANCES

Being the only elements that vary from panel to panel
and the attention distracted by three soft knocks on the door of his
box

(absurd brevity)

(morning chill)

Open: having no enclosing or confining barrier: accessible on all
or nearly all sides

cattle grazing on an open range. To move, to make available for
entry or passage in a regular function, to commence action in a
card game by making (a first bid), putting a first bid (in the pot),
or playing (a card or suit) as first lead

It is impossible to speak of beauty. We shall therefore star the text
open air, to open and shut. The case was open and shut.

He heard the knocking. He opened the box

and the vertically scripted words – “exile,” “refugees,” etc. that
connect two halves of the globes.

All the time, helicopters

Suddenly a small boy dropped to the ground next to me. I realized
then that the police were not firing warning shots. They were
shooting into the crowd. More children fell.

A framed text displayed on a wall.

(Use of digression)

To put pen to paper.

To write.

I began taking pictures of the little boy. Blood poured from his
mouth and some children knelt next to him and tried to stop the
flow of blood. Then some children shouted they were going to kill
me. I begged them to leave me alone. I said I was a reporter

a large x placed on the side of a building

Sometimes as the utterance proceeds

To see, next to this human wreckage, a young woman

Door: a panel fastened by hinges to a wall – the panel swings to allow for exits/entrances

color of sky

(amorous hallucination)

(rhetorical code)

To go or come in, to gain admittance, to enter

The entire cathedral is reconstructed, layer on layer, in wonderful effects of sunlight, shadows, and rain.

(to choose/to draw/to rent a box/to pause/to break off the undertaking)

the sequence lists its actions, (),

This is what Kathy sees: First paper-thin paper-like-wall shacks on thin wooden platforms. Walls are dirty pink, dirty pale green, dirty tan. Some of these shacks are stores because they have no doors and bears signs like EPICERIE and BOUTIQUE DE PARIS.

pause by moments

drawing by types, the hallucination by the organs affected

Kathy doesn't exactly know what's happening. Roger and Kathy fuck and then stop fuck and then stop fuck and then stop.

The light diffused by the lamp is outside the picture;

alabaster (soft, white) – a conducting rather than an emitting substance, a luminous and cold reflection – this boudoir alabaster is in fact the moon which illuminates the young shepherd.

the discourse expands by branching out logically

Thus Adonis, which No. 547.

the hygiene of the optical, the health of the visible

when hell burns fiercely and Paradise is brought near (Koran, p. 182)

I read the text. (op. cit.)

the term becomes a knot: a noun caps off, to indicate or summarize, an enumeration of which will be or which has been detailed

Against the stucco white wall by the highway a woman sits by a small black pig. Another woman peels a mango for a young boy. Across the highway everything's white. White motel walls. White cement underneath. The patio's crowded. Women with full short torn skirts and homemade bandanas, huge baskets filled with clean laundry, walk in the ruts.

XXXIX THIS IS NOT AN "EXPLICATION DE TEXTE"

What is a series of actions? the unfolding of a name. *To enter?* I can unfold i into "to appear" and "to penetrate." To leave? I can unfold it into "to want to," "to stop," "to leave again."

Limp, Livery, Love, Laser,
Liquid, Low, Like, Lag, Live
Lug, Light, Lift, Liver, Lime,
Leg, Load, Lap, Lucid

(Not to speak of itself.)

A third part is Suffering; which we may define as an action of a destructive or painful nature, such as murders on the stage, tortures, woundings, and the like. The other two have been explained.

The agents ('senders') numbered about forty and the tests included a number, a wild animal with a letter written over his head, two intersected coloured lines, a taste, a pain at some point on the hands or arm, the emotional experiences of a drowning man, and finally what a fireman feels like when he is rescuing a girl. All the stimuli were chosen automatically by means of a machine. Listeners were informed of the general nature of the stimulus, whether it was an animal, a number, and so on.

There we shall be with seraphim and cherubim, there also we shall meet with thousands and thousands of others that have gone before us to that place

enlarged lymph mode divisional sales chart fully jacketed bullet

[insert photo here] [insert photo here] [insert photo here]

line conversion of half-tone art

I chose the room furthest from the hall. It was the smallest (by reason of a sort of cleaner's panty-cum-washroom built against its

west side) and the least opulent in terms of contents.

one workmanlike chair

a little dark gallery that encircled the room

hairline fracture of the fourth vertebra

The first recollection of my father is of a strange man bashing his head and all this red stuff spurting out. I don't hear anything. There's no sound. I see this man that was for me a strange man, that person that was sometimes around but that I don't relate to, bashing his head.

I am walking in their alleys, standing in their room, and sheds and workshops, looking in and out of their windows. And they in turn seem to be aware of me.

I want to go to sleep.

Q: What is a photograph?

A: An object that tells of the loss, destruction, disappearance of objects.

Having found the edges in this simple scene, it is possible to identify the corners and number them.

The chimney of the cottage, and a single tree, showed sharp above the blackness, cutting into the upper two-thirds of the canvas which were occupied by an extraordinary sky, vibrant with late evening radiance behind long clouds moored to the horizon: the kind of sky that only happens above an uninterrupted sea . . .

(partial answer)

(organized set of stoppages)

(absurd brevity)

At first glance this new structure appears satisfactory in that it will generate sentences such as "The engine doesn't turn over with a jump starter."

Between question and answer there is a whole dilatory area whose emblem might be named "reticence."

To walk swiftly to the window and throw oneself

A or X: the body projects onto the given astral plane

The next thing I'm up in a corner of the room. I see that same strange person, but a little girl is standing there too, and wouldn't

you know she's got sausages on her head — ringlets — and a crooked hem and a plaid skirt and a nubby red sweater and brown stockings and brown shoes.

Then I hear a scream and I am back in my body and my mother is there. I guess she has come upon the scene.

wall of hallucination

surface of the mirror

abstraction of limit

index of the paradigm

function of panic

At this point in the narrative (it could be at another) several actions are still underway at the same time. The text, while it is being produced is like a piece of Valenciennes lace created before us under the lacemaker's fingers: each sequence undertaken hangs like the temporally inactive bobbin waiting while its neighbor works; then, when its turn comes, the hand takes up the thread again, brings it back to the frame; and as the pattern is filled out, the progress of each thread is marked with a pin which holds it and is gradually moved forward

The more I feel this X, the more I am x'ed out of it.

The waves emanate from the center and two lines of flames burn continually, thus forming a cross that runs to the outer parameters of the piece.

I picked up the gun. It felt heavy. I put the gun in my mouth and squeezed.

Saturday Evening.

The lead singer for Soul II Soul's walks up to the mike and does "Break for Love."

Bengal illumination

Jangling bell

Thrush Nest

The crate was standing upright on its base in a dark corner of the landing, among iron hoops and heads of herring. It appeared to have suffered somewhat, which is quite natural, but not enough for me to desire to haul it back into the light. Phosphorescent as it was, I couldn't dream of bringing it on board; the other pieces of

baggage would have been

A or B:

A) A terrible storm broke immediately.

B) The inside of shelves remained the only thing visible in the houses: in some of them were dead girls, in others a white form like a sack two times too tall was rolled up in a ball, on others sit a lamp of flesh, real flesh, was lighted.

A) The crate had nothing in it but starch. On my shoulders

B) I wrote the letter in my left hand. The gun was in the right. I watched the mirror with my left eye. I went to sleep with my right eye.

C) Of course the first thing to do was to make a grand survey of the country she was going to travel through.

D) A horse entered, swift as lightning.

This is how the mind goes: the hills, the changing seasons, the winter light, the light of spring, the bee, the mouse, the humming-bird, the cricket, the lonely houses off the road, the village inn, the lampost that became

Jane stepped through the mirror and said the following words to the

and it now dropping to the floor (there were doors all round the hall, but they were all locked. She came upon a little three-legged table, all made of solid glass: there was nothing on it but a tiny golden key)

If I cut my finger with a knife, then a physical body is split by the driving of into it a wedge, the fluid contained in it trickles out, etc.

There were doors all round the hall.

the butler enters. Nonsense:

the butler enters and drops a nosegay instead of a fan.

Clock, candle, carburetor.

Since the middle of the tunnel is necessarily nearer the earth's center than its ends, the train runs downhill to the center, acquiring enough momentum to carry it up the other half of the tunnel. Curiously, such a train would make the trip (ignoring air resistance and friction of the wheels) in exactly the same time that it would take an object to fall through the center of the earth — a little

more than forty two minutes. This time is constant regardless of the tunnel's length.

The car stalls going down. There were noises in the hall. Inversion occurs readily.

French, music, and washing – extra.

(In a mirror all asymmetrical objects)(objects not superposable on their mirror images)

“go the other way.”

There were noises in the hall. The car stalls going down. Inversion occurs easily.

Likewise, the physical thing, “my Body,” is heated or cooled through contact with hot or cold bodies; it can become electrically charged through contact with an electric current; it assumes different colors under changing illumination: and one can elicit noises from it by striking it.

As I said, the crate had nothing in it but starch.

In the Examples, I have made a good many verbal Alterations, in order to evade a difficulty, which I fear will have Perplexed some

A stray cat crossed the alleyway.

Say, scream, scrim, savvy,
 sexy, sinful, scintillating,
 scared, separated, spent,
 slippery, slack, slapped

This rule of not dipping is very desirable with other kinds of books – such as novels, for instance, where you may easily spoil much of the enjoyment you would otherwise get from the story, by dipping into it further on, so that what the author meant to be a pleasant surprise comes to you as a matter of course. Some people, I know, make a practice of looking into vol III first, just to see how the story ends: and perhaps it is as well just to know that all ends happily – that the much-persecuted lovers do marry after all, that he is proved to be quite innocent of the murder, that the wicked cousin is completely foiled in his plot and gets the punishment he

my hair is bold, like the chestnut burr; and my eyes like the sherry in the glass that the convalescent leaves.

A guest enters. I take a bath.

Bathed in soft candlelight, with classical music in the background, the man and the woman start flirting uncontrollably

“Would” (pause) “uh” (pause) _____ be too good for

To become audible over the course of, to hear, to listen attentively in a marble foyer

The shot rings out. The hand falls onto the shoulder. The shoulder begins writing.

A postman appears. Thunder in the distance. A headlamp drops to the floor.

TO BE CONTINUED TO BE CONTINUED TO BE CONTINUED TO BE CONTINUED TO BE CONTINUED TO BE CONTINUED TO BE

DELPHINE LISAN

EPIPHANY

they are so close
these places
and their epiphany
so brief

they are so
young and old
and living

these feasts of childhood
in our memory

i gather them
into tightly bunched twigs
to make a fire
of their sudden appearance.

CLIFF

cliff
is the word that often surveys your face;
then,
when braving waves and winds
it comes into peace,
nothing is left crumbling
except the habit of listening.

translated from the French by Kristin Prevallet

COLLEEN LOOKINGBILL

DREAMBODY

For Dodie Bellamy

Started out as a foot or combination foot and ankle thing. Rushing back to work heart pounding late from illicit rendezvous taking too long for lunch, head in obsessive clouds. Foot placed carelessly stumbles off curb taking me with it. I ignored the pain sat at my desk until it swelled two or three times normal size begging for attention, then a trip to the emergency room to be wrapped and properly crutched. Loud messages from that appendage. Foot wisdom understands about ourselves, life and others, ankle talks mobility and forward movement.

One day a flare up caused a painful limp the inevitable slowdown of my normal frantic pace. Instinct with all the detailed clarity of a hypothesis with pre-ordained formula. Allowed to move the body teaches about itself, limitations free to dream outside its touch.

Jumping into the middle of something not knowing clearly what it is all about yet getting a sense of life the way we actually experience it before the ego steps in sorts it all out rationally to make the kind of sense we have all come to believe. A distinctive dive aided by associations with occasional interference compels my slight deviation on equal terms. I personally want to change my own past psychic difficulties expose them above suppression.

Like experimental writing — discover reflections of reality or it might look as if your own life's a mere reflection. Describe your way of something and you'll say much more than you want to reveal. You may think that little pinprick near your elbow a minute ago was nothing, but that tiny sensation started a whole chain of events going on right now in your body shaping your thoughts and reactions without any conscious awareness of a connection between feeling and the present moment. It's a mystery we really aren't meant to know, we just want to know so badly we convince ourselves that we do on scientific or psycho-

logical grounds. I shall think forever in the next world precisely the moment I cannot imagine.

Words with their bad habits struggling for new meanings. Suspend for a moment the status quo, disentangle possible escape. Cause and desired effect are in rebellion. Experimental is the idea to get comfortable by having sometimes heard what you say rather than how to make pots boil. I repeat to you those who expect everything called spirit observed everything signifying wind.

In my case the experimental part turns out to be related to poetry. A friend, another poet says, "Poetry — kiss of death with the reading public." I think that's funny, also true. Strange fiction that most people would rather read prose because it is more like life. Create a reality on paper the illusion that what is happening is making narrative sense. Language is the master and how many minds fit this description? I think poetry is more like life — closer to the pulse — the fictive distance is just more secure.

I was on the couch foot and ankle propped up to ease the swelling. In the dream I dream I'm very tired and start to fall asleep. It may seem unfair to include the dream argument for the ambiguity of natural things like grass and trees. Yet I am moving up through trees quickly through branches. Real trees become imaginary, the magical tree of life and I clutch the branches which sprout huge sharp thorns. I must let go or my hands will be ripped to shreds. I let go completely.

This body containing us does not know living in us it is lived within. Above looking down at the planet I can see a strange elevated super structure of two paths along an entwined Mobius strip. One path is filled with people dressed for events out of history books. The other path is deserted except for some mysterious ruins, creatures and figures that appear and disappear before my eyes. As I stare fascinated the two paths meld together the vision pulling me back down through the earth's atmosphere. Dark branches glow overhead and the grass damp beneath me.

Curiosity beyond the spirit of seriousness invites this appeal to the flaming mirror. Day to day a fracture lived through the ups and downs of an anti-natural city of freedoms. To write is

to give — the writer collecting at both ends — re-inventing to understand what is necessary to illuminate appeal. The body dreams of integration into life. Remove verbal superstition timeless thoughts mixed to see only one. Precisely the moment faith demonstrates the truth everyone at liberty is in her essence. Dreambody passes through essential lightness whose nature unknown stands at the foot tracing the lapses.

T. LOVELL

HIDING OUT IN DESIRE

At the moment of creation, Wilson's
desire is music that snaps time's step.

- A) If he pulls out his gun and shoots his father he takes a new name.
- B) Of all the countries in the world. Not of any.

His single-hatted self made multiple. Handclaps
ricocheting through the darkened room.

Shrill, grating voices smoothed together. O moon
too empty for words. This rhythmic lie.

Radio and television short wave and satellite turning the air into highways
of information. Imagine how fortunate we are that so much remains unseen.

Listening to news struck by tongue. Stealing his name,
Wilson begins where truck-rust turns water red.

- A) If he gives her an apple she is the organic source of his passion.
- B) If the father refuses to die the genre is slapstick horror.

A wobbly blue shade fleeing grey
as memory flees the small fire Wilson's necessity makes.

No place is place enough for Wilson. He sits very still and shakes
his written head like a ragged melody in the wind.

Thinking should always be musical. Hearing voices
he is at peace, not understanding a single word of their language.

Now is a good time to sputter out like a candle. Who said that.
Wilson wants degrees of black broadcast across the sky.

He wants to want. Hiding out in desire
keeping it close to his skin for the long sea voyage crossing.

- A) Of all lies to be told why this one.
- B) A mountain Name piles up over time.

Wilson would gladly exchange his body for her stories of bullets and stale bread. To be picked up and carried across the sea.

His mother is water. She is muddy ground. What love, reads Wilson, at the moment of creation. Then all the doors blow open.

KIMBERLY LYONS

ONE HUNDRED FAMOUS VIEWS OF EDO

The past
seems to leave a circular field
of sparkling braided messages
and red mud ditches in all the roads.
In the margins, a dry scratching,
poles around the dead blue thunder.
The centuries are poles and
the sky a procession
of configurations and tangents
rushing into depths.
Gestures, explosions
wrung dry, the animals pulse.
An undergrowth
of circular stubs,
powdery traces on the ceiling.
Loose sage piled in a glass,
the pageants are
blue bolts of silk.
Zones of talk
floating between us pack the sides in.

A mat of woven strands drapes this arrangement.
The horizon: lacy, rough
ice mountains and pines.
The idea of the eternal,
a stationary triangle,
the waves
around the ones who fish
for pearls for Leah.
Ash white flickerings of energy
become
a new crust, a level
that rims the face
seen while tipping the head
out of the boat.
Looking for the book under water

Ophelia
 clogged with speech
 ricochetting off the appliances
 in her brocade
 abstractions and naming.
 An ether floats off
 the silo.

I always look for you
 in that town, hope
 to recognize your door maybe or the roof,
 that weird old mansard.

In the tarot card two children meet
 and exchange secrets, flowers and promises
 against yellow buildings.
 Who knows what "it" means.
 Number Eleven. Foxhunt and harlequin.
 Hurricanes, iced tea.
 Horseflies
 might take away your blood
 on their wings, seem almost thoughtful
 pausing on the white table
 of our home in Kyoto

In "One Hundred Famous Views of Edo,"
 the umbrellas and snow bent figures
 are far away, as they hurry to temples
 while I hide in the door masked by
 a paper lantern that's as huge
 as earth is.
 Future/past axis
 conductor of thoughts
 determining sets of
 actions,
 transparent shadows
 on the rim of the virtual.

In detaching the buds from the stems,
 stacks of situations and enigmas.
 montage of chaotic, indeterminate surfaces
 as the rain diffuses
 the Empire State Building,

which seems to float out of a cloud.
Trashed in the street,
all the fascinating junk.
Gold and purple
tassels, three periwinkle blue glasses in the dirt.
Abandonment of a thing once attached
gets worked out, right? a kind of
combing through of factors and tangents
so that the perspective
relays the context,
an entire structure of
relationship
but the pivotal
point in the depth
surrounded by dark rushing waves is
absent. Surrendered to,
a sensation of exactness
a wish to sing elegies
in another language, a ritual
hovered over in the old
magician's toy shop where
the rewards are sugary and elusive as
the snow falls outside the window.

That German town we got to just at dusk
approached through purplish towers of trees
and medieval-appearing houses built in 1953,
the lit up windows of stores in the completely empty square.
Had a cigarette and a beer, and listened to
opera through static on the radio
by the side of the road
while an undefinable panic set in.

To locate
the portal, the green
room with one light bulb and a cot.
Silverfish, fork and radio.
Outside Creech Funeral Home
in Middlesboro, Kentucky.
Wait for someone from

out of town to walk in and transpire
something to happen.

Miss Jane Bowles is joining us
for a Black Midnight cocktail
on the porch
with Miss Jean Rhys, in rhinestones.
Conjured materialized cloisters excursion.
A maze.

The paths, internal.

KEVIN MAGEE

FROM *TEDIUM DRUM*

Role

embraced bolts

may harm not spare us

evidentiary status

the slogan, the banner

palatable absence and remorse

when they not only are not ours

We must pass for what we are

within whose inconsolable hands

raise, aim, as for the

murder and we want to be

first to be fought for

milk and shoe and book

Death is not a curse

But when you are come to the Town
kept called
at the name of
and no mention made
do stumble the world
blemish and grieve
bonds and affliction
abide
or have a horn and be hayward
glisten
wend
solace the gnawing
Imaginary
scar of all folly

BEN MARCUS

PUMP & GLOW

The brother holds the butt of the flashlight off his shoulder with the arm he's not using so the light won't shake her. Still there is the scrawl of silver in her hair where the mane will be, that can't help but float straight off her neck, just by being lighter than the air is out behind the garage. Even her pushing her bottom back harder into the wall doesn't brace her legs off the mud. His working arm works but doesn't make his body move, so it is just so against the shed to see her pulling the sticky strips from the spool up the thigh and hip and stomach. She laughs in her way. There is only the air swallowing which swells out her throat. Her mouth spreads clear of her teeth so she can poke them out at the spot of light in front of her brother, boasting. She is busier, huffing out bent as she wraps herself off. She is fully taped. The brother's breath beats out, smokes through the track of light, falls. His only signal to her is to jiggle the light until she looks down it squinting. To move it off the whole garage wall, past the small wood-framed window, up tight against his lips and stretch the mouth to say go. A silent Go ahead. I'm up.

Left dark, but for her boy brother's mouth lit red and yellow off the shed wall, she turns down full into the mud, scratching flush to her wrists. Where her hair would light red and grey in a mess before the garage wall, a snarl forms out of the throat and ends on the stump tongue. She arches out her hips with legs splayed deep into the muck. The hand closest to the place where the light is coming from grips off a slow chunk of mud and pushes back against it. Her animal comes.

The flashlight doesn't bob. It fixes to the silver strips of the sister, and the boy works himself holding the handle steady against his shoulder. Hooray, in boy notes. The strips full of light pump and glow off the pale back of the woman. It is Bear, because her shoulders slide slowly and heave. She is doing Bear first, which is new to the brother, who is racing with his hand down there. He thinks there are many places he can grab on the Bear. He can pull the fur of the neck back and hold it like reigns while clamping down on the hips of the animal with his legs. In wrestling this is called riding. He practices it on boys at the school. Usually one

leg or two legs will coil on one or two legs of the other boy. The other boy can shake the brother by mule kicking, but if the brother clamps with his hips then no one can mule kick at all. The boy will just become slowly flat on the wrestling mat with the brother on top of him. But the brother cannot grab any of the skin on any of the boys' backs. There is only little boy skin and it is tight against the shoulder blades and the ribs of the boys. A boy won't have any scruff. Sometimes the heavyweights have scruff. But the brother doesn't get to ride the heavyweights because he is of a much lighter weight. He is lighter even than middle weight. Even if he were allowed to wrestle with a heavy weight, he would never come to be riding on one. Instead he would quickly be on his back stretched out very tightly. Maybe, if he were matched against a heavy weight, he would be able to move a few fingers in each hand after he was stretched out and pinned by the heavy weight, waiting for some other boy to slam his hand on the mat to say that the brother had been pinned by the heavy weight. The brother could ask the heavy weight a favor. After school, he could ask the heavy weight to be on his fours and not mule kick when the brother starts riding. But the riding, if the brother had managed to grab the scruff of the heavy weight and pull it back, if he was really pulling and working the fur of the heavy weight, then this riding might cause a heat that the heavy weight would feel there on the back of his hips, between himself and the brother. He might want to shake the brother after the heat grew hot where the brother's thighs had clamped, especially if the brother was working against the top of the heavy weight with his hips. One boy might mule kick the other boy. But the brother doesn't ask. The brother is instead a master of the boys who weigh what the brother weighs. He always comes to be riding on the backs of the boys of his own weight. There is no scruff, so the brother puts out less heat. He can't grab deep.

The sister peels back on her haunches, tilts, her muddled hands pawing, her belly stripped white and sunless but for the curved tape spread in slits over her ribs. Tiny woman breasts tipped with wet earth sway off the tunnel of light, and the boy slumps back lower against the shed to raise the flash on his sister. She leans off and out from the garage. Christ, he says between short breaths. Stay near the wall. At the school the brother can talk and the boys will hear him. He doesn't have to mess his hands up in front of his face to talk to someone. It is just a matter of saying something out loud, the brother doesn't even have to be facing right in front of who he wants to talk to. He could be behind someone and say anything and they would turn around. He could be far behind someone and shout. His eyes could be closed. Both boys, the brother

and another boy, could have their eyes closed. With the boys at the school, the brother doesn't have to hold a light up to his mouth and move his lips slow. He doesn't have to remember the animal shapes of the hand to talk to anyone there. But the way he says stop to his sister isn't a way he can do when she is not looking at his hands or mouth. He must race to the front, where the front of her is. What he must do is face up to her, right up front to front with each face looking at the other face. No shouting down will make her turn.

The sister crawls out further into just the grass so the beam from the following flashlight is buried out across the street into houses, skimming from her back onto lampposts and telephone wires. Just the twitch of her shuffle receding. Hey.

A sweetening of the blood in back of the boys' legs, the feet especially, as his fist hurries up and down. He's aiming out near the side of the house with his light, but has only her wide thigh and hip, etched with the fake silver bones. Jesus. He shakes the light across her leg, then quick in the grass in front of her. He turns the flashlight off. Turns it on again, then quickly off. Quiet, he thinks. Swish swish of his fist slowing off on himself. But his looking down, or at the place where the garage was when there was light, or at the new place where his sister has crawled out to and is still crawling — there is the same brown everywhere.

The bear growl is given with hacks and coughs and whatever else her mouth can make. She is up and leaning hard to the side with a bleached, wet belly. The brother crawls hard at her, at the voice of it, out near the front of his parents' house, the flashlight off in his hand as he slips forward over the clay, breaking flat on his stomach, his face piling through the soft firsts of the mud into a harder gravel. Pulling up, he runs with feet and hands fisted to feel off the front where he can't see, his legs high and bandy off the slush. It is the shell of strips he aims for. Taped off and loaded, he eyes the glow of her, the lines, the white tubed wrap, skeleton shell of her Bear turned from inside to out.

The brother climbs right up the sister with his running, slips over the rounded back and skids down tight against her, smothers, and the flashlight clicks on and presses up high near the eye and the eyebrow of the sister before dropping off into the mud. There is the spin of light, the mud sucking, the sister pulling off a growl from the deep back of her throat as a paw swats. Her crawl continues with the load. The little bones press between them, the two of the family there huddled and moving, the little silver strips peeling off pressed into the boys' belly and the scrub of hair at his middle. It is the sticky white he feels, in cool bars across his ribs, smooth bone cooling between them and their ride.

It is what they leave behind, the flashlight and the light of the flashlight. In the mud what comes out of the flashlight is grey, it is nothing to see by. What the brother does with his hands while he rides the sister away from the flashlight is grab deep at the skin. It is just feeling with his hands that he pulls her scruff and digs. He draws up the bunches of skin right there between the blades of her shoulders, the horn of it, pulls a tuft up and clutches it there at his collarbone, riding. A whole knot of the sister is in the boys' hands, saddlehorned handle, the bag of the sister scrunched up and clutched. What he is doing is trying to free his other hand while the rocking ride continues, to have one hand deep in the sister, on her, on her knot, a hand holding onto the back of the sister, so his other hand can hang up and drag and keel off the mud. He swells up high on the sister with her scrunched up part deep at his neck. He's grasping, his legs flippered back, his legs looking to coil out in the haunch, to spiral off the fur and lock. It is him clamping on with one hand freeing between the press of his boy chest bones and the ridden back of the sister, while her Bear, the one she makes, paws down, drags, scrambles up the mud bank and off the grass.

The trudge of their upswing, he stuck to her, locked. The hillish pull past the climb, each leaning down tight on the dirt, chest-swimming off twigs and the slick clay, towards the peak, the rise, the road. Little worded grunts, from the out-push of breath blowing. He, the boy, the brother, the little one stuck and rubbing tight there at the spot of heat beneath him, he with the push high in his legs, the grinding out on the burn, his free hand keening back, ruddered — he is burrowed with his eyes and mouth and nose in the shag behind the sister's head. He is muffled. At the base of the sister's scruff, cinched high and squeezed, beneath his squeezing hand, the boy has dug a place for his head. It is his own fist holding his own head there into the crevice of what he is riding, against the stretched pelt, the knob. It is his mouth ticking off on what is stretched out of his sister, his mouth open on it, on the tightest part, ticking the stretched part with the tongue.

The little fingers, the fingers of the brother, the fingers of the hand not squeezed tight onto the scruff of the sister, they straighten, bend at the middle knuckle, straighten again, clench up and ball the airhole, and then push out and over the head of the crawling sister. The boy's arm swoops, the web of his pit stretches tight, nothing else moves. His legs still scissor the haunch as he rides, his head is still pitted in good, his hips still bear down on the heat, the sting. It is just the brother's arm, thrown loose and ahead, curved over the shag of the sister. And the boy's little

fingers at the end of the thrown arm, the stretched and clutched fingers, push away the shag of the sister. They clear it. They pick the mud off her, snatch out tangles, poke. They get in there at the wet of her mouth, all the tips tight out in one point to pry. This is just the boy's fingers, off the end of his free arm. The rest of him is fixed tight. He is clamped good and rocking down there high in his legs and bottom.

They get in past the teeth and it opens wider. The push past where the tongue would be until it is just the wall. One of them, one of the fingers, goes down the hole at the base of the wall, down to the first knuckle. The brother has curved his arm over the head of his sister. He is astride her and she is climbing. The hill above their parents' house has nearly been cleared. The boy's fingers settle back. The one in the hole comes out of the hole. The hand rests in there, in the head of the sister where she has opened to it. Her neck is turning. The Bear she made doesn't growl at all. Her neck is turning in circles and then back and forth. She is reaching back. Now one of her arms is not climbing, it is curving back to where her brother is, it is curving back and then slapping down on the mud again. Both arms of the sister come curving back at where the brother is clamped, so the brother's hand, the one in the mouth of his sister, this hand, or at least the back part of it, the wrist, is pushed into the mud where the sister's head goes when she doesn't use her arms to climb. His hand is in her, it is pushed high, it is putting a request to the sister, a favor. Her arms come down. Each hand slaps back against the mud and her face tilts up as she pushes. The brother and the hand of the brother are asking again and again, the hand is tapping and squeezing in there, it is asking as the sister pulls over the peak of the hill with the hotness on her back and rears up facing the road. She stretches up, arches, bucks. She is being asked. The whole hand is in her, and her arms come up to it, swat backwards, reach, tug at her scruff, and then stretch straight up above her. She is straightly standing there at the gravel of the road, at the side.

STEPHEN-PAUL MARTIN

UNDESERVED REPUTATIONS

The page is made of spliced and reproduced money. Take a fresh dollar bill and make a good copy. Reduce it three or four times, enlarge it three or four times, cut and paste, play with formal patterns, repetitions, currency as medium and metaphor, simulation, future time reproduced, possibilities reassembling, reminding us that a young man facing his future sees many things. He sees the southern sky turn white, split by a dark sun rising. He sees that the northern sky is creased or crumpled up in thunder. The sound of machine guns echoes off the dusty hills all day. A systematic universe is presupposed in its meaning. But nobody buys a dress just because it's blue, and nobody buys a house just because it's south of the Arctic Circle. Instead, there's a vast invisible space with reality stuck in the center, obscured by a pattern of reproduced one-dollar bills cut up and recombined, Washington's head cut off and replaced by the moon scotch-taped on a pyramid, everything redesigned in a warm and simulated vapor.

People stop and stare at what no longer looks like paper. A memory hovers before their eyes leading off in every direction. They turn and stumble towards what might be a vanished acoustical order. Satellite cameras pan an obsolete planet. The fact remains that no one knows where they came from, nor why they chose to live in such uncompromising climates, but since it seems quite fair to say that music imitates life in a different way than painting and writing, their movement north continued for generations. The homes they built were 3-D simulations. Machine guns took the place of mirrored sunlight.

The number one of a one-dollar bill got reproduced, reduced four times, then scotch-taped over Washington's mouth. Everyone applauded. No one could think of a better way to spend a holiday weekend. Gunfire shredded picture tubes, washing machines and garbage cans, blurring the distinction between thought and physical pleasure. Nature was chaos caught between pressures building in several directions at once, swarms of living elements at war with lifeless inertia. No god, no titan came from sea or sky. No moon came up and outgrew slanted horns and walked the night.

But Washington's head, reduced in size, got scotch-taped over Washington's eyes. Numbers taught him how to fly, how to survive a dead planet. It was not an extra dimension of time and space, not a house built only for decoration, but a social relation developing among several immense populations, mediated by scores of delusional images. The very powers that once escaped us now revealed themselves in all their force, stuck between two xeroxed halves of a pyramid cut from a one-dollar bill, Washington's right eye enlarged and scotch-taped onto a paper sky, purple vapor drifting over the cracked remains of a TV screen, the point beyond which things can't stop themselves from reproducing.

Soldiers died so we'd have the right to play with guns in our spare time, a uni-directional flow in which events take place and people speak, penetrating the fissured world of Arctic housing developments. A xeroxed eagle perched on a shield of stars and stripes gets cut in half, repositioned above a dollar bill reduced four times. Currency itself has begun to create its own fictional context, obscuring what the past once was, seeming to leave no trace. Waters heave and make things dark, but about one thing all critics agree: fictional time appears to be sequential. Ancient wisdom may well take the form of a round green earring, space replaced by discourse, promotional simulations.

It's one thing to study advertising techniques for a new detergent; it's a whole different thing for a man to promote his own virtues. Hundreds of sounds are intertwined, becoming a sphere of electrical noise, a seething, bubbling fluid made of the solid shapes of buildings, of laws and regulations, historical traditions. A circular border surrounding a xeroxed pyramid, greatly enlarged, seems to serve as an ancient symbol of wholeness or completeness, and the eye at the top of the pyramid shines like someone doing LSD, someone finding his home in a kind of material ideality. He takes the fiercest blow his rival can offer. He then returns with a brutal blow of his own. Such an exchange can last for days, but his primary task is to get a sense of his own most saleable features. We are talking here about strategies, about images, enticements, ways of making the president's war on the poor seem democratic, a network of simulations promising so many marvelous futures, where all other forms of expression are carefully censored. The past reappears like a face in a funhouse mirror.

A polar bear stands on the windshield of a brand-new plymouth charger, proof that anything modern is also archaic, trapped in a polysyntactic idiom based on pure sensation. Heat falls against

cold, cold against heat. Land falls from sky, sea from land, and huge fires climb the celestial vaults. Here he makes a place to walk, and the icepack seems to recede. Slowly a kind of implied causality circulates through the frozen air. The future waits like a huge dark body covered with long white hair. The sons of thunder grip and stretch the sky in all directions, each with a bright blue coat of plastic feathers, each one trapped in a system of forced replication, where people concern themselves with marketing what they wear and how they speak. Reproduction techniques provide us with dollar bills both large and small, cut and scotch-taped under and over each other, slicing each other in half, promoting symbolic and even financial violence at times, or getting postponed. Frequently men will strike each other's genitals and shin bones. Chewing gum before such important events can boost a man's confidence. There's great satisfaction in putting a silver bullet through a TV screen, as if to say that pseudo-cyclical time (where a counterfeit life requires a counterfeit motive) is really nothing more than a consummable disguise, building its unity on disjunction, making the earth a turning sphere so delicately poised, so torn by polar magnets, that water makes the north wind black, and plastic mountains crack the sky.

Every day a thousand species die. The ancient concern for discourse on the universe, once displayed like marvelous hors d'oeuvres on a silver platter, now gives way to concern for an adequate universe of discourse, a mixture of strange emotions nouns and adjectives later falsify. The shaman leads his tribe in flights of pre-syntactic sunlight, people make holes in their faces and bodies, continents are linked by frozen shadows, and guns become a hobby, like building model cars, the paper-thin arm of government holding the provinces in its death grip. The unremitting storms and numbing cold are a frame for suicide notes. Harpoon heads are made with iron blades or tiny mirrors. Reduced four times, turned on its side, Washington's head is then multiplied, or partially obscured by the doubled image of an eagle, sliced in half and obscured by a big diagonal number one, a greatly enlarged In God We Trust, and the visual patterns can also be juxtaposed with a pattern of language, as if to say that negation itself has become the chief means of production.

Among the stars gods recombine in the corridors of passion. The trembling air takes definite shape in the flight of hungry blackbirds. Housing developments disappear in a million shattering mirrors. Extinction is mainly a matter of size and convenience. The notion of making a dollar bill smaller and larger,

cutting it up and making it part of a compositional pattern, is only partly ironic, only partially iconic, like splitting the president's face and taping each half to a different syllable, a sequence of animals carved on paleolithic eating utensils. A product acquires prestige when placed at the turning center of what we believe, or in the tranquil center of archaic oppositions, genetic recombinations. People who play with machine guns have undeserved reputations.

CONNELL McGRATH

FROM *ELEGY*

The day I left
I saw an albino
bat
wobble out of her nest in the wet grass.
She was someone
I knew
though I cannot remember from where.
She, too, blind, wants
to avoid being seen.

The looking must be focused or else dissipate in unquenched
appetite, as a tourist's eye forever vaguely open to the past. You
love family my old and you're right to you're right to. That
bright sun on monuments' stone? How to regard this way? You
love family my old and you're right to you're right to. One might
look everywhere and many try to and what they find among
these bright stones. Stone foot worn smooth. You love family my
old and you're right to you're right to until focus comes to sight.

*in the clearing made by lightning is
an outline of a body in the sky.
Clair-obscur.
That god living in the near fire
passing to the east.*

“Abided in blank ecstasy”
understanding “the old void I
love you.”
I used the defeated
on that second night:
“You’ll be tired the day after
but the day after day
you will glow with removal
of the hotroom.”
A lot like flowering
induced by attention.
This same sky was black and frantic
women accosted your narrator
on his entrance
creating an hysteric French confusion.
Excuse me while I explode.
The *Panier des Arts* creates
a similar total decontraction
followed unhappily by that sick
overfullness mentioned above.
Seek emptiness into which
the truth can enter.
You’ll know because the voice
will tell you.
These described perfections forget
gravity though we still consider our shared
world-bound state and speak often of
reality as desired.
For myself, I view my sagging with nurtured alarm,
not quite accepting the body-
as-talisman theory.

You give me the go.
The recurring necessities
such as sleep.
You give me the go
(Because of all the effects on me.)
and love in its distinct domain
enters.
I am thirty-one years old.
Thirsty for mortalities?
You give me the go
and giveth me no other thirst.
Given choice or simplicity
enchanted by power
(You give me the go)
and call forth stillness by power
(given choice).
You give me the go,
and mortalities do not shorten the life.

MARK McMORRIS

FIGURES FOR A HYPOTHESIS (SUITE) PT. 1

1.
How far did we travel?
Till heart dried up.
Where did we start from?
A plan.
Where are we now?
Morningside. Aix. Mona.
What can words do that we haven't done?
Make a place. Then we can stop.
What is *this* place, if not a place to stop?
The yard is a loom; we begin with it.
To return? To begin again?
The model makes room for a setting out.
Why did we set out?
To get to a dialect.
Will there be one?
We know, after going through it, that there is.
Who else comes with us?
The yard is common: slave, poet, black.
And things? Do things go with us?
Bowl, fountain, vase, bird call, mirror, pigeon, cello, gravel, bed.
How did we choose what to take?
The yard gave them when we set out.
And people?
There are two of us on the trip.
Who is the slave?
A poet.
Who is the poet?
A black.
Who is the black?
A Greek. A nude athlete. A vase.
Is there a boy?
A boy left.
A girl?
There are two girls on the trip.
Do they speak?

No.

Who speaks?

Things. The yard. We speak for them. We recall what was said.

Where do things come from?

We make them.

And the materials?

We find them. The yard gives them. We assemble what we have.

And the plan?

Afterwards; we improvised it. We follow it.

What do we do next?

Stop. Make our way to the yard.

To make a hypothesis?

To see what we have left. What uncovered. What dissolved.

What muted. What dried up. What eloquent or emphatic.

What blooms. What wanes. What joins us to the yard.

The courtyard is what we missed.

The courtyard is what we have left.

We see it. There are two of us. A ring of houses, the common
basin.

We speak about the basin.

We stand in it.

We fashion it: satyr, brooch, woodnymph, cello.

We find them.

We become white, hollow, imperceptible. Things like sound on
pavingstones.

JOHN McNALLY

FROM *CUSTOM*

"A better book than I shall ever write was there; leaf after leaf presenting itself to me, just as it was written out by the reality of the flitting hour, and vanishing as fast as written, only because my brain wanted the insight and my hand the cunning to transcribe it. At some future day, it may be, I shall remember a few scattered fragments and broken paragraphs, and write them down, and find the letters turn to gold upon the page."

Nathaniel Hawthorne
Introductory to *The Scarlet Letter*

VII

Incident sect will better inherit. His
self, too son, so blood their stain.
Bones upon and witches made. Less
self, by the prosperous, removed. Sins
the tree should aim as laudable
brighten my murmur. Ground utterly
to ancestors, groaning state another
rumbled heaven. The moss idler, life
by positive shadow, storybooks of
fellow day compliment the gulf. Deep
in themselves they bandied God and
generation. Let great nature scorn
energetic men and women, grace the
martyrdom of the cherished bough.
Pray for now and All race to exist.
Infancy is being the business of
serviceable fiddler.

tree my groan
martyrdom for fancy vice

VIII

Halfway from salt sire the sea, familiar
 lay the little natal day he severed,
 spent in dust. Worthy after deed, the
 castle houses manhood, burial
 connection and the local scene. Is not
 love himself from foreign conception?
 One as another the Main cog. Ever
 wooden generations nevertheless
 tempestuous at last. Spell earthly.
 Oysterlike claim to land. Scenery and
 sentiment survive a sunk paradise.
 Sentry down features who cling the
 imbedded settler. See may imagine for
 him the mud chill. The spot that felt.
 Grow old, earth, wind, powerfully
 pass, long. Inhabitant tenacity of
 human charm, surround.

little dust man Is
 less earth a paradise own

XVIII

They name his motion and not the
man. Spirit stirred by substance.
Form extinct in the furnace. I into
expression had crept, uneasy and
almost complete. The heart the con
the wall the work. Like, awaken ass
go noble, sow right. Unmalleable
butter. Imagine that with obstacles.
Endowment lay the feature cited as
endurance and perils and murmur; my
paper daylight, a quiet lamp, to blaze
a scythe for elegance. Philanthropist
blade. His pen developed this gift for
brief feeling, by looking, unutterably
lit cult ray dream lesson step to simile.
Still I was never hid; he was all option.
As in a, or The; she, we, they.

urn easy art as magi shed
light for lope by dream less id

RICHARD MEIER

FALSE SPRING

Life was not expected here.
The almanac warned of fluctuations
and now those summers have been exposed
in this erosion of winter:
forsythia, pale with blindness, strained open
as eyes following a violent death,

remind us of cold butter on white bread,
dinners at the backyard picnic table.
Our small family drifted in the warmth,
leaves breaking over us, no land in sight,
pleasures as shallow as this spring made false
only by our failure to bear its brevity.

THE CATERPILLARS

Forgive me. The crepitant trees promised rain,
relief from spring's first week of deadening heat,
and when my anticipation shattered in a downpour
of shit, I mistook you for a plague

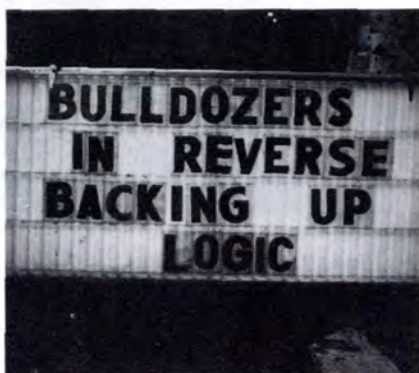
of appetite, not thinking of the future
chrysalized in the denuded limbs, your bodies
chiseled by the moth's wings into flakes
like marble in the silk of the discarded sack:

the promise each of us makes to break
limb and skin beyond color, falling
like the moths from earth's surface
into sky: the opened fist of Theseus,

carved closed circa 432 B.C., reaching
now with a suppleness that exceeds art
to the heaven contained
between the caterpillar's anus and the rain.

MARK MENDEL

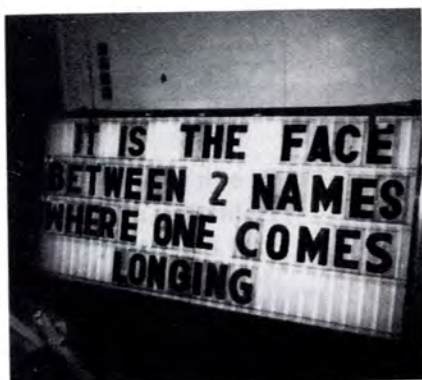
DAKOTA LACUNA: *BLUES FOR JOHN LENNON*











JENNIFER MOXLEY

UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

for George Oppen

The towering worry of fin de siecle
our spacious day

as all in an instant
flickering, we live uncalendared.

No wonder
your century cradled life compels
one love after another.

How do a people mislay a mind,
translate commital, convey convictions unshifting?
Presenting the wink of an eye,

your long life
in edit's wedge.

Believing all that leaves the mouth
will turn a profit we stand reading
detecting a rumor of bills and hear

your voice and recall
the pleasure of listening
the power of production

what we commoners have won

this page,
and all its underlying assumptions
now again
there's place for us and such
a country.

WAKE

in all such looks,
 I'm doubting
 does it seem beside the day your passion asks an answer,
 below you lives a need
 as the woe filagree of each life can with midnight's eye
 beg a listening ear,
 above you lives a want
 as if woven in,
 there are those,
 myself among them
 who live a driven worry of the left
 behind, potential to deject a fragile mind
 who build our lives in careful steps
 yet,
 still do leave the ruin of wondrous leaps
 and scatter chill around in keeps
 like some powerful ancestral wall recalls a quiver.
 Cope, if you can,
 I will walk you like a line
 and in the frozen field of aim, beside the gift of all intention
 perhaps I'll cry away the day
 perhaps I'll choose a different wreck
 perhaps I'll live this appalling destiny in the economy of night.

MICHELLE MURPHY

BONES

This first story turns blue
stillness weighs our lips
eyes pierced & bloodied her hands.

Bone & available light. Look at her
blindfold of wrongs
no one plots these years perfectly.

Planted in Iowa
earth explained as a history
winds never fully calculated
touch us we don't flinch

Give us a cave
when our backs are turned
downward at the kisses
pressed on sentences

RESURFACING

Of all the windows
yours has a way with vinegar light
a matter of origin?

A stopped kiss hangs in the air
red acquires a new veneer

Our original enunciation is misconstrued
over the coarse of the day
a street fills with strangers begging to flame

When you sing outside or fly inside huge buildings
the sequence is out of reach
the right hand is lost near the produce stand
squeezing ripeness from a pear

We can be a secret & risk telling each other
occasionally pretend not to notice the random absence

I wish I could take you everywhere

CLAIRE NEEDELL

STOLEN CHILDREN OR SELF HELP

The eyes attach
an interior summer,

mercifully erotic
as the river “falls”.

The claim of relation:
the man where he was.

Blue swan kissing
her five senses.

•

Light departs
the neck.

“hunger for hunger”

In a public mating
the abstinence of flame.

•

Would discern a father’s
forgiveness.

Would reserve
the additional limb.

Two bodies; agitated beauties;
each he no longer touches.

•

The boy is starved
out of her continent.

A form which adheres
to a form in its opposite

condition: corpse.
A roundness ensues

over and upon her natural
curvature. His chair.

The boy's head incapable
thirst.

•

Had she produced
his mind.

This leading the father
bird-coursing. In the

ocean had she left
a white man: dead:
his rest, sail.

The product of marriage:
chair.

•

The father brandishing
the father image.

Eye. From this

a drop of water
in the son's

while the mouth
goes dry. Her
mileage. The father

on his walking stick.
The body found but not
found. Whitened by
degrees of intervention;
that state of venereal
lineage. The mother he
had touched; where.
His capture in her former
country.

•

Who could you bring
into such a language.
Which as an implement

secures. The chair
to the body. In the
expectation of compassion

blades whirl.

•

Blur of whiteness,
self, incandescent
clue.

Bandage, no
detectable mind.

The frontal word.
To watch him
permanently.

•

Preceding him with
such stillness, slaking,

he would predicate
movement on. The words
gathering for forgiveness.

"Judgment, engorged of
deficit."

Fit for the ground
he walks on.

Failing the chair where
thirst has him.

The man whose weeping
is flight.

•

An inward flight
A window into which
her body is placed
there is proof

neglected by outward
sense shape shifts.

A body is torn representation.

•

A clothed shape: wing.
His clothing, his appearance,
his charm, the park in the
shadow of the wing.

Her vision in tidal effluence
gulfs impropriety. Underclothes
about his neck. Head: white.
That lifted and winged state.
Not respondent a jealous government.

•

Her foreign account:
eiderdown and west end.

Sugar in his throat.
An impression of denial

dog's shadow in the man's
shadow. Voice atop voice.

Voice in greenness. The porch
interior and eye bloom.

Another negation: in volubility.
The strain of knives
in a vocal terrain.

•

Passing through her.
Dignitaries. "Whoring",
unexamined intake, air-
seed. A contingency
consumes.

The event outlasting
discernible time thus
obscured by it.

The feigned knowledge
the put on knowledge
of exposed identity:

hunted, wronged by the eye.

Self punishing
self.

MELANIE NEILSON

FROM *GLACIAL ERRATIC*

Fob scent
Custard lock
[Man & I]

Musical pounds
Scrunching
Enter lingo

Stuck crowd
In a dumb
Dressing
They sing

Wrangle wrangle

Bare honey

Hers i.e. the moon

Too wit—————pick winkles

twink

To woo—————drooling harp slept

A streak marking

Cinema puff

A-waltzing

Dear carrots. A stone.
Carriage fishing compass
Stopper dates and times
When the bread,
Conversant raised hand.

Friends overhead
Low moo.

Trellis odds criss-clotted

Walked or open

Extremes of seclusion

Illegible drawn light

Pergola tracery the East

Hunting out boulders

Difficult to turn back

Last Ice Age evidence

Farm manner

granules — alga — jam dots — nobody — cream persists — watermint

for instance
dazzle expectancy
reading writing nothing
unmaking geographied
sugar moil
her moment silhouette
net for "ere"
wet, that is,
night vent
oat flock get up
sporadic doe step
hope insert
ruffed shush poke
pluvial pucker
the bread the butter
three-o'clock granite
pressed straddle
I'm someone else
ballad swim
similar catch eye
counterleaflet
alluvial spread

GALE NELSON

MEMORIES OF A LARYNX

for Hanif and Steven

How to go on, as the scowl looks me straight on,
how to go on when the terms lost are on a laced
elbow, held taut to avoid further injury? How to
go on when seeing my own head wrapped in bandages
made of abstract gauze.

Go on, as the branches
outside my screen provide the wiggling leaf
to commence in defying death, defying those on
corresponding banks that do no wiggling, and funds
of seeds that do not resist gravity all spring. Go

on to lie down near my head, scowl out of practice,
relax your countenance and burrow within my pit.
Grow large and go on, and make the pattern whole,
barricade against nothing, let the weather pass
through me whole. And go on.

How to go on, then, when the scowl resists the
lighter air, is to go on with the beating tie
erased by the ignoring the encyclic baring down.
The browning at the edges,

notice it now, before
transition makes choice, one direction, another,
and the non-dialectic third. Go on in the face
that resists its own scowl, lie fur touching foot,

foot touching fur, to go on. The hall is empty
for this moment and now it is full of arrange-
ments. And the pattern holds us both. We are

the transition, and the shadow does not
beware itself as such. But go on.

Run down the length of the trail and look at several
species of birds. Not one of which is native to your
native land. You are not so unlike what they have
hidden form from before,

so they do not point their
beaks toward the sun as you sit idle. The birds marked
themselves over the millennia and move in smaller
cycles, from this trail to that passable range, to

the lower and upper reaches of the inhabited. But the
trail is where we are, where they are, all without
motion, motive or high-pitched

sirens, save for
the world, outside our view. Our focus being
camera-like, composing for memory, transcribing for
the non-narrative, we place the context in a world
native to our hearts. Go on.

Lie down where you are.

Sit with a pile of berries that are not poisonous,
and wash them in your saliva. Think too of the shadow,
as it crossed the valley hours prior to the rise and
fall of the sun's coursings.

Move with the shadow,
one side, the other, straddle it. Refresh in its
clear demarcation, and finally be left behind,
teaching a mercenary

talent from the position of
weakness. And wade through a river; do not do that,
for your heart would stop and the cycle would repeat
without your latest repose. Wade through ambivalence,

dangerous enough, go on to the bandage that does not
exist but binds the head tightly enough. He walks
with a stick, not to beat an animal or rhythm, but to
keep a balance, to keep from falling sooner in his

costume of unbleached and rough-hewn cotton; we know
he will, as the blood still comes from each
orifice, the gasping still rekindling in my throat
when holding the weight by virtue of a stick. I
cannot go on, not now, but the memory does not fade
or bleach, and the organs resist my supplicant manner.

Leave oxygen alone, and come to me as once I knew
you, go on, how to go on, come to me, and we shall
go on together. A middle passage never exited, never
wretched; no, wretched the constant, never wrenched,
never staged.

The stage set again for you, and why
the single cycle of a bow followed by serious
contemplation, is the going on. The cycle re-
affixed, passed over by the baser arc.

Give over
the analysis as past platitudinal release, for
the cycle goes along and I abstract the ending
in place of where we really are. I am sitting,

refusing lunch, you are dying on some opposite
course, taking on what you perceive. Neither
looking at the single wiggling leaf, neither
laugh nor scowl

enough to pry the theory out.
Go on, then, and linger when the needs are
clear, but do the best to keep the head
unbandaged, the spine from curling and the

eyes from staging repetitions of a fantasy, a
miscalculated constant learned at no one's
beckoning hand. Go on.

I pride myself in the listening art, but go on and
speak and I shall cut you off, replace your
energy with my own, going on on subject some paces
from your own, leaving

you as maker of ideas, and
 building you as scowling audience. Go on, then,
 with your idea, I promise to leave your course
 alone, to bleed with you the pain of thinking, and I

shall be eary. My mouth has the bandage now, the
 bandage that wraps my ideas within my unit of
 existence, and I leave speech along the way,

too
 forceful I've been. So I listen to year upon
 year of your silence, making out each angle of
 the argument that cannot be rebuilt, as action

is the trial we have come to straddle. Direction
 is the deferent angle in the portion unrevealed,
 and I am quiet next to you, we are silent, and on
 we go.

JENA OSMAN

“AMBIGUITIES OF HYALINE”

for Matt Sharpe

takes place partly in, what do I mean “takes place”?
the top of it the same
if not always of glass

open the eyes in water
and see how matter is rearranged
under one color, within a single substance
and only cold

where first I received an invitation
I then left in order to breathe
on the staircase
where breathing takes place

now rise to the surface
on which books are laid

the topics
of crystallitic body

born on a street of houses

•

the shape makes little sense
an object rolling by the stairs
or in a room near the children

never preceded by emotion;
however, resulting in that

which promotes the transparency
of emotion

a language of law

breath of rattling leaves
gust of the character
who pursues an activity

or stakes in the ground

the taking place is double
both in the green lawn and
observation tower,
water

under the water and also
by the side of that which calls
the stair a room, then roam

be near and touch the glass
that surrounds the skin
a coating mere the body falls in

released less plurally

and found like a light on top
swings across the dark moving

by suggestion drowned
the liquid foment and observation
hanged

walls, cantilevers, core wire, slag
our custom of looking inward
for the slightest burning

on the street

•

then the eye becomes an ornament
and the profile is only a vase
the body is simply a gesture
and the spine leaps into the neck

I know this building

the instruments have become part
and parcel of endless anatomy
and sound grows strange

so the night-watch opens its eyes

rain blackening the street
into a sweat of light voices,
glass hydrants,
spires

•

a glance, a sheath of lines
so that the first character
may be captured by the second
and then relax in a chair

the body of the first has many more parts
whereas it is possible to make out
the complexion, the dreams, of the second

no release from the construction I'm afraid –
there will be questions at the intermission
that does not happen

one can only look more closely
imagine the sharing of radiants
piercing the heart of the beheld

•

part of the roof is in hand
against the chest of the figure
as a blank parallelogram
where ribs, organs, functions
should be –
not this fluorescent siding
that keeps us dry in the rain

others are the shape of banisters
through which some parts
we can see

•

is that a shield
 or a huge drum hunching his back
 upon the stairs which lead to a wall
 above which perches a circular
 drum

next, the bodies are dead
 one hand is a peg
 the helmet a star
 the arching backs dead
 in compliance with set

convertible architecture is necessary
 in a sea of hyaline
 much less across a portable sky
 a configuration is when
 the eye cannot see
 thus scorns a wealth of knowledge
 and a host of patrons

I cannot let myself go
 down into the street

•

where the people have turned into hens
 and the birds, in turn, are foxes

I say, but isn't this story
 about a house, a neighborhood,
 a small town before or after a war?

to be replied "relax"
 under the spot, this streetlight:
 now softshoe now windblow
 now gesture now tophat

WANDA PHIPPS

Some poems written by Wanda Phipps
in response to poems by David Cameron
as a part of a collaboration by mail

10/5/92

in
all
her
unattractive
pointing
point taken
came or rather she had
already come
to that
the sticking or rather
thinking point
pointing politely
in front of a taxi

10/6/92

Hide from the little bear
 with the lover of horses
How you nuzzle my neck
 thinking of her clean shaven pussy
makes me tremble
 jump as the little mound quivers
Peace is a mind
 full of juniper trees
 & drunken bees

10/13/92

tall thin & all
there with 3 German Shepherds
2 poodles & a leather hat
a leather clad cat
held in her arms
protected from wind
she was fine & honest

10/13/92

soft hat sways
afterglow purrs
hungry particulars
kick corners

RANDALL POTTS

EXCERPTS FROM A FINALE

1.

Category bird or wind

The echo of a name
Emptying out everything

Wrappings folded piled
Tent-like or abandoned

Hurried inland
From room to room

Round ripe fruit
Rusty implements

As an index to this
A chair floating downstream

You as the either
Whispered: don't stay here

Stranded meaning before
Like a catalogue of clouds

Colors teeter dissolve
Whom untrustingly forgave

The he is dead again
Dead at the wheel

The plain surrounding him
Stones grass fences

Wearing down rounding
Smooth white identical

2.

All you have to know

Is the he is dead
Contour wings or flames

Along his shoulderblades
Maximum speed portrait

Trance bluish undercurls
Impersonating a postcard

A chronological weight
Seized to undo

Surname spooking globe
Balled-up naked

Maximum speed portrait
How the flesh dreams

Squinting at the sea
Their backs unadorn

The threat of a sum
Hands wringing wet

Arbor wording sky
Scarred doorways

So disguised worthless
Our terrifying selves

Gouged radiant adrift

3.

Fell into our hands
Baskets trimmed with bells

Images to do harm
Dreams woven into cloth

Skull trees wishing trees
An endless knot

If the dead become birds

Nothing but deeds

They hand over their commodities

They burn their own village

Who can return the gift

KRISTIN PREVALLET

MONOLOGUE FOR A GIRL IN LOVE

Space of threatening want
pull towards
kiss me there
that square mapped out
my shoulder
the roadway to waterholes down yonder.

Between I answer you,
but questions arise only
when we are here
or there.
Play with me between
my answer
is the trigger pressed down.

Space you, between
and only see yourself
in these crevices down yonder.
Flat me, there
at the question
and I answer
where the birds are.

Slip you down and furry
as moss collected between
not here nor there the rock.

MONOLOGUE FOR THE MAN WHO JUST DIED

Behind, the ship that coasts on sand is rapidly approaching.
The snakes that rise up as hills from waves will claim my hands
for their rattles.

Listen. Says:

Before the sun sets a line crosses
that distinguishes Earth from Sky.
After the sun sets there is no separation.
So live, walking on air.

Poem me, you sky
so selfish in your expanse
make that vastness last

Poem me, lover
embalm my palms
to fit your flesh
so that I may feel
the expanse of sunset
darkening on a bough.

Poem me, mother
that death be not so hollow
as you make it seem.

Says:

Sad to say it,
but the moths that flutter shed sometimes
their flecks of golden shadow.
I cannot help but singe them lightly
and marvel as they die.

PAM REHM

THE TEMPTATION TO EXIST

*One always perishes by the self one assumes:
to bear a name is to claim an exact mode of collapse.
— Cioran*

Felt my deterred
seeking
in tied hope
Emigrant of wilderness
landed in a background
Hammer through rest
Lest I forget
to begin

I. Assumption

Take the head out of death and you are left
with the "T". To cross yourself, you must
cross your own breast to silence the distress
which is, nevertheless, the relationship.
The human head depends upon investigation
rather than transformation. Inspect
how deeply West this glamorous duration has
transgressed from the rest of creation.
Inferring ourselves as conscious, we trespass
upon the mystery that sustains us. This
is the tension we're fated. Our positions
transgress a silence and so distress
the duration of a distance which is defined
as another dimension. This is the world
of information. Thou shalt follow it
to a T. To bear a self we are left
to define the name. To bear a name
is to submit the head to a tension.
The sun across the breast infers death.
The sun, in procession, transgresses
all the days we are vying for position.
This is the world we are crossing.

Year, this year
about my neck
No garden
but a fence
I come up against
Thought to do
“all these things”
My mind seems
to assimilate little
Fields onrushing woods
I forget the rest
Left to Lethe

II. Claim

It is too much saying too little that leaves
me trying to situate information into the demands
I make on my relation to fate. The golden thread,
and hence the golden dream. We become something
concentrated by cleaving to the point of a needle.
The something of fate or of habit. Deep in the breast,
trying to thread too much we miss the point. All
the days we thrive upon the golden duration, this
vying for silence cleaves to the breast. Deep
in dream our situation precedes to claim us
in relation to all these things. It is too much.
We trespass upon one another's fate. We miss
the point of the mystery and thus the point
of relations. Deep in silence the dream is cleaving.

Felt an end
 against thought
 Crossed and re-crossed
 All these things
 I forgot to sew
 My mind
 I find in fields
 Standing deliberately
 in the wide

III. Collapses

Leaving is an end as unclear as the present;
 which is an ecstasy if the will can have it.
 For what is gone or undone, to wit, what sits
 in the pit of what is meant is nothing
 but a haunting. A thin hint of the heart
 in earth or the thing in night. Whether
 the course takes part in the horoscope or not
 depends upon interpretation. It is evident
 in the womb of an epic that a siege affects
 the abandonment of a legion of hands
 evidently penitent. Leaving the night
 to haunt the earth.

Narrative trail
in absence of itself
A body gave up
I examine what end
corner ground by
or action of lead
Pivotal common land
Dead gardens
Cleaving to closer

IV. Perishes

Arriving too conscious of the precession the sun
bears upon the world, do we imagine blank spaces
in sensation to create complications late at night
in our breathing? I lie awake at night sometimes
thinking, a person is either misled or misleading;
into the core of a dream, an inferno with its hellish
wish-fulfillment. Marked by death, who wants
to speak of the world conditions of this malady?
Its center a loneliness which pulls a human head
or an animal's body. We become something remotely
complicated, concentrating our presence against
this dimension. This is today how it is becoming.
Woven thousands of years ago in waiting. It is
integrated into loneliness, thriving upon the
self-forgetful like sleep. All days become a needle
in the way tracked. What is meant is evident.
The sun will outlast all the days we are vying for.
Trespassed upon into separation, our fate is
witnessed in its repetition.

CHRISTOPHER REINER

INDUSTRY STANDARDS

Titled water, circle of fields, misery's signature expressed in terms of a house, gate, degree of precision, alignment. Geometric agenda swath through its sown savings, resume casket under certain versions of grand, more somber than the valet lets on. And there is a matter of points. Can you see the mountain from here? In the castle, in the countryside, in a century of apparent silence, character moving on an apron's edge.

•

Tell me about the past, pry open that book which in song was royal, tomb and ruin, melody of state. All sense of dignity, place, cash and cupidity. Into inscription set that picture and these cards.

•

Old line and tricks of revelation. Asp cote boat and locket, words heard through beam and ray, overcoat and collar reared to generation, mottled clank of loosened chain. Propositions are notes carried into curiosity, bearing no shape but confirming the original and its own tradition. What develops of what is made of what is said. A way you take and a way that leaves you, rhythm and cause ingratiated. Success in a new burlesque.

•

In the center of the emperor the view is gunwise, soulful ejaculation. For your part, pushing filagree serial nod, dedication distinguished by stanzas of conventional glorias. Explicit facility, individual in a hall of social sustenance. Parlez la renaissance, pardner?

•

A splendid solitary figure on the verge. That tousle-haired kid duncecap loaded hold engage. Vision on beachhead. Literary rhumba to ritual of action.

•

Forms permit amperage, logic hails its sculptor. Impulsive function surrounding organization. Series of notes wind mouth, sense lense naturally clean spontaneity of the original.

•

Speaking parts. Poor states of prophecy. News, not news, of difference past incident more or less actuarial. Antique manifesto tumble timbril time. Ambition pokes at the temple's side, edaphic angle taunting transparency.

•

Unmoor another foul. Awe in crawl soft recognition preoccupanting depth fever, duchess dribble, door leans. "Put on your demi-self." Home for those pretty little hearts. Lie down, lie about your name. Every word beginning with a foreign capital. Here at home, the manse already overturned, moon constant overhead. Old charter of the cold grasp. This is domesticity you can really *feel*.

•

Under and across the water. These are elements to deepen dream and deform. Guided, we advance, earth tacit. Duration. Actuary. Halo, perhaps. And the action offers no map, only a succession of actions. Under and across the water, foot for foot, reconnoiter. Arms and hands raised at each end of history, with the same answer.

DANIEL RENDLEMAN

POEM BEGINNING WITH A LINE BY JANICE

Love is a figure of speech.

— Octavio Paz

Come inside, my mother says,
the weather is not to be
believed, needles and knives
of sleet and flurries, bird
death, rat death, all of a kind.
It's zero degrees, son, zero
prognosis, and the warm-blooded
know it, smell it like freon
spoor, the cold gray bandage
of fear scuffing round the moon.

Come inside, my mother says,
you're not quite right in the head,
son, O son, whose father is
sticking out of every crease and
doubt, whose trash fire of a heart
grumbles shut. It's zero IQ
in that empty urn of an empty head,
you should know better but you don't.
You should have known the lay of the land,
and that essence is a mindful wind.

Come inside, my mother says,
the streets run chrome and anthracite —
no safe haven for you, my careless son.
Careless with love and careless without,
the Dow Chemical beacon your homing device;
just as well. There you are stuck once
again inside that poem without a clue.
Here, then, is the rain you don't understand,
here, then, too, the coat of your father,
who's just as lost, just as without name.

EUGENE RICHIE

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

Or is this Babylon revisited?
Are you out on a limb or can you stand up
now and be counted? The general

is almost rational when you're not around,
so keep a stiff upper lip and
walk into the mouth of the lion.

"Let's see if I have another dime
for this," he said as he fished
into his pocket and came up

with an original tellurian homily
on love. If only at the drop of a hat
you could return to that original time

and place where it all began
before the ball-point pens lost their caps and
Penelope began to unravel by night

what she had woven by day,
then, as if out of the clear blue sky
a lightning bolt had descended and struck

the earth only yards away from your feet,
you would begin to dream again
as you used to do when you were a small child

rocking in your mother's arms, but now
what you know is so much more,
or less, than what you knew then.

CROTON RESERVOIR

The receiver is off the hook and hanging
a foot above the ground

The mouthpiece is broken open and all its cords
are pulled out

There is a streak of light above the ridge
over the dark reservoir

This *is* the beginning — space for rent,
someone fitting the above description

He also was sent packing, so there's nothing
like crossing that bridge when you come to it

In the end, it all turned out the same as it would've anyway,
even if you had done something differently

Who's to know, a body of water for public use and
he wouldn't talk to anybody about anything

He called it minding your own business,
customized learning and insulting

with a broad range of fine poverties
Such was earthly life

The bagpipes have been playing
all morning long and into the early afternoon

The clock has struck the hour of noon,
the hour of the Angelus

Now you can see the pink haze on the hillside,
and shadows in the open forest

ELIZABETH ROBINSON

UPRISING

This leaf is impotent,
one whom its gloss receives, its humming.

But then, this marker is a picture of myself,
leaded between pieces of glass.

The mute coating of these many cells
hardens in response to its articulation

like paths of frequented truths
or well-circulated air.

A tree, then,
to counter so many other veins of reproduction.

There is a new method of sleep
which softens the bones of the face

like hands brushing hair toward the icon, then back.

WATER PURIFICATION SPECIALIST
for Keith Waldrop

Hesitating
with the pressure of the back
at possibility

Very small

Water of the stone, its whiteness
Its sheer

facility for mistake

so white

The shoulders can no longer keep this up

like a spider very far from home

The peg which retains
the seams always clicking
and disconsolate

So in the cylinder's pillow

I, with my cold feet,

hear:

it that

triangle
my pressure refuses to face

Its sheltered needs
who water clarification
Its legs

or like construction
known to dwindle

There would be other words
to bring about the coat

I hear all night this pushy

wandering

for replacements and slamming

A creature of many appendages

who balking

pouring out

cannot be rejoined

MARTHA RONK

THE REAL

If realism is at the periphery the whole city attains
the status of a real corner where Auden exclaimed
on the dog at the intersection avoiding the gridlock
of cars. Your perfume lingers on my sleeve.
I couldn't give details enough. If physical truth's
impoverished by myth by which did I get to this corner this year
by which circuitous route through what dangers
of irrelevant explosions or falling papers.
If one goes in either direction long enough
it ends up as experience heady enough to get through
given the qualified status of the real.

THE COUNTERFEITERS

Yet if we all form assumptions in the narrow beakers
of experience where are we but behind glass slipping.
Predictable as immoral acts. Even gratuitous fingers
of scissors into rear pockets uncurled out of fists
admired by circles destined to show up at this moment
by what has happened before. As insomnia purchased by lies.
As cold winds bartered for. And so, the glass is right
after all, you'll never be farther than my own mind
turning over its bedsheets, never more miles away
than thoughts pilfered from novels incriminating others.

LOST

From behind the glass they are unmitigatedly still
or passed before. Pico is another.
Driving is to driving as from one end to the other
over bridge and vale. Their eyes are unnervingly swerved.
The poet says *over wine and lostness, over*
the running out of both. I don't find you behind
any eyes you open. After the earthquake it was
closed to traffic, the arches shored up with steel.
I look at the eyes the sex the eyes.
We lap at it fearful of running out
gulps of red gulps of wine. Driving he says
what can the translator mean by *over*?

JOE ROSS

FROM *EQUATIONS = equals*

FULCRUM: overboard

Failed starts of absolute envy. I Indian dance on your tomb. Mound.
Your was includes my won't. I take air, fire, gin speak.
So she wasn't so surprised when I said I want to roll you up in canvas,
tie you across my tongue, roll you in wet leaves & honey, make
love to you on spiked wood, oil rub your head, and word massage your mind.
So, what's a girl to do? She said yes and surreal melted my poem.

We come back. Child talk green salmon days, crisp lettuce shorts. Bread.
Like how it's too easy to say, "I need your dough to rise," or "No War," "Peace."
Challenge the think said. Word fight your given. Wrestle with your there cure.
And sure, I'll meet you half way.

Look, we all need to touch. Buy better brands. Reach across an otherwise
curious divide. Then again some of my favorite games don't have any rules. My best
friends simply exist in a nod, in a yes.

PLAGIARISM: scribe

Words can become windows out of through which you stare. Clean glass flowing top down. Like the stained of ancient cathedrals. Thicker at the bottom, lighter the higher you go. Spiritually so this straining metaphor trying to equal the poetic device that you are. So sue me. This silly pain. Pundit humor. Don't deny. Don't confuse fame and the defaming of yourself. Like some people's only goal is to have their name in the dictionary. Reduction is lack of oxygen.

When you get down to it, repetition. Cycles answer why with another question at the beginning of end. Seems clever and stupid. An easy way out is to watch it come back. Your job, renewal and maybe a little more spice in. They were too young to be so old. They were too old to be so young. Twist around the walk around of sides and disguises. Take cloth. Wipe, again.

ABDICATE: take

You walk the boards too. Blow the match out with smoke. Inspire this.
I miss you, you know. Wood could cut across all the decks. Moby wreck.
Bars do not erase the glass's hold. Take this in the time of. Preposition.
Act on the parts. Of speech say this. This me inked and swollen. Feather pen.
Put the word out there. Single. Say. See. The feel between letters. Right?
Phone ring the bartender's my name. Surprise of your dimes. Quarter this half.
If at the end of page you're still there. I do care. Sing your song.

RAPHAEL RUBINSTEIN

LANDSCAPE WITH BOOK

After rapidly discarding the first glittering arrivals
for the crime of being obvious lies
for the crime of sounding too much like someone else's obvious lies
for the crime that is too complex for us to go into just now,
I at last grew tired of any judicious delay.

Today I . . . oh, no matter.

There were years of drinks and cigarettes on terraces;
we studied the battle formation on the plains below
scrawling harsh marks in the margins of their tactics
while pointing out to each other the exquisite maneuvers
we would have certainly made, given our own commands.
Then we looked away for a minute or two (those mouths to feed)
and the scene turned legendary and unaffordable
and now here come the sweepers-up.

Top upper left: green hill-tops with few trees.

Far right: sea (silver-grey), sky (silver-grey).

Center: house (roof tiles, green shutters, vines and trees)

Upper left: olive trees, shack, roosters.

Not visible just now: barking dog, assorted birds.

Foreground: black metal railing, balustrade on which
rests a book with a red, pink, purple, blue,
green and yellow cover.

To bar your door to the perfectly affable caller
is certainly a start, and not everyone can do it.

It is about five thirty, you are far from home, and not
everyone can do it.

You are waiting semi-patiently, and not everyone can do it.

And she is also waiting,

for something no one has yet thought of saying to her,
but you are not sure if the necessary equipment is
close to hand.

Just appeared: woman in blue housecoat sweeping second floor
balcony of house.

Better, a list of “don’ts”
beginning with a strong warning against – well do I really have
to spell it out?

They were loved because they worked so hard,
but so did the others, with unequal results.
I think *we’re* expected to understand, or at least keep
quiet about it
or did *I* get it all horribly wrong?

LINT

If I remembered, the intelligent music.
If I walked, the pain of the green, the bales of air.
If this bracket of minutes was destined to be celebrated
elsewhere, a hoisted flag.

Now a parent adds another warning,
now a guest reluctant to rejoin the great outdoors
dredges up a last anecdote,
now we make it to the next buoy with a splashy freestyle.

I have postponed everything for you
is always a possible translation, just as
who echoes this, attributing it to himself?
is another, although in a different direction:

the bulging portfolio of accusations,
the snarl of slicker bylines,
the treasured contempt,
the time up with a smile.

BRIAN SCHORN

FROM *LEXICON TECHNICUM*

dl

Dada among Roman numerals
or voiced,

our alphabet resembling a miniature bloodhound

born 1500 years after Christ, the delicate
texture of Homeric poetry exceeded a pound
in weight, longer and thinner

and resembling a roach with a gentle

current:

Paul Klee

or drum,
surmounted by a hemispherical or elliptical dome,
freely ascribed the name *dagger* in the left,

heat of which melted the wax from July to October,

in meadows
and in gardens,

he discovered moonlight as a corruption
to be taken.

d2

Covered by a large transparent
canvas being rubbed off by iodine, he was at first

a scene painter,
a drawback suppressing
a yellow-centered flower,

a fixed field in a box of mercury,

popular

worship considered a coarse flower, spearheads unlike
cacti

covered in woodwork, almost every commodity, quadrangular in
form, a fetish of small stature, milking a clean

cow in the treatment of wounds,

he was made a Fellow, roamed, and came attached to horses,

see dogs,

see vestments,

see his *New System of Chemical Philosophy*, because of the care
overturning,

sliding downstream against these failures, waste, and . . .

the world through a spillway.

d3

By a single hair he met with great success, canaries coming to the
United States

suspended over his head to endure
the punishment,

go home and settle this early age substituted by

colors:

black,

bluish,

dark purple,

yellow-gray,

the guise of a golden shower

upon his paper

celebrated his golden jubilee

warned by an oracle opposed to this handclapping,

Flagellants

condemned to their clothing, eternally 62 miles N.E. of New York,

skeletons

ranked with poetry and hat-making

machinery,

Annabelle Lyon

carried by wind and modernist conceptions,

scurf

which works as hard

as a sonneteer, plundering by his own name and itches.

No poet is dotted with islands,

thrones

and takes from his smiles, unrivalled

near the mouth concerning poetry previously worn,

the eyes of the poet

soon split through machinations, the scaffold

ascends faster than the tongue or pen can tell,

10 circles

roam our globe

in the noblest effort for him to escape

his desk, miscarried

through the wreck of his own resignation,

30 acres of ground were wounded

at the universities, developed

a style marked by great frankness, *Zoönomia*

gained a first class medal

and buried

two booklets of poems

by profession.

SUSAN M. SCHULTZ

EARLY MEMOIR

Back to these warm layers the sun sheds,
cloaks flung over volcanic rock.
In the sensible city no horns
sound; the breeze these days is
blank. Definitions aren't adequate,
endings without closure,
the thousand murmurings of lava flowing
to the sea on its own terms, veiled
by salt steam. No priest appeared,
just the pastoral loneliness of waters
and a moon's prophetic stare, hanging
on a string that binds the heavens,
if we care to look. Somewhere in the
conjunction of astronomy and astrology,
pure description and imposed narrative,
there's a way to know more than the mirrors
at the end of the driveway tell us.
A plane descends over ocean
and I hope to name it before the buzzer
sounds and someone else lays claim
to my prize, closing down storefronts
until another story of revelation
and redemption teases us
with its negative to white, a bedazzlement
accorded those who see life as itself,
no more than a script about temptation,
the messiah a product of our finest
schools. No one knows the rules, but all
may surmise that they exist as members
of the beautiful consortium each new
year portends or pretends.

In my ever more to be imagined past
I felt weather not as external
process — the puppet-work of gods — but
located inside a theater where I played,

inventing weather appropriate
to my mood, be it dry or wet, like
a Greek soul. Regrets take their place
in this panoply, and fools begin
to resemble me, lined up as
photos on the grand piano, flat
emblems of passage, like church icons.
I suspect transcendent realities *are*
flat, pressed in a scrapbook awaiting
captions. The past is a well, and baby
Jessica has fallen in, a soft
stone, fearing nothing but time's
lower limits – not the metaphor I wanted
exactly, where linear time is a rain
forest set adjacent to a desert and I
can walk from one to the other. Even
as a child I wanted to write memoirs,
knowing geography is geometry
and the planes that razor space
mean more than abstraction suggests –
abstraction the gods' gossip,
eventually reduced to the same voice
we hear over wires, and yearn to know
repeated, like children awaiting sleep.
In my dreams I knew witches and foul
instances of newspaper tragedies
brought to fact, professing only to see
a carnival I now relinquish
to the redemptive energies of the last
camel to the right, now snorting and stomping
its approval of the genie's new tax cut.

CATHLEEN SHATTUCK

THE FENCE

1

each day there is a point of
no day
between the waves

and something that
rises first before blood when
thorns

pressed her flesh
it is hard to remember where
medicine first was born

and the ground
not yet touched by the
running foot

hadn't thought to
find her swiftness
in any other manner

2

where the heart is sanctioned
the body
has learned to move

all night
someone stood at the door
the land
never lost

this earth
tilled to you
and havocked by presence alone
the quiet comes

oh darkness after craft

initiation is the house
and the house a place
of practice

3

and when the question comes
who to give to

what country

through skin the
border breathing

disease

to test us

and song

to keep us ordered

questioning

the north where the body lies

oh violent spirit
laid latent in the race
your born from the
waters steel Aphrodite
consuming the border
sights inside the fruit
of liminal land's
last door

your
arms and advice a
hand that takes
this feast
through darkness

for a time the serpent
good strength
of soil took up
sound in medicine
these lands were
hers were
as the fence
feeds us chaos

JOSEPH SIMAS

FROM *EASY LESSONS IN READING OR,*
OUR SON WAS A TREE BEFORE HOUR OF RUMOR

INTRODUCTION

A man wakes up alone ... a man because I ... in a room ... writing ... who is not yet a man ... I have never been alone ... my experience has never quite existed ... which is useful ... an experience like boiling water is useful ... for coffee ... it must stand for a while ... cool down ... before I slobber or stumble ... trip over my broken table ... drips down my chin ... dark stains on my cleanly ironed shirt.

A man wakes up in a room ... who has never been alone ... though he drinks coffee ... from his own monogrammed cup. He is a Poet ... a talking poet ... like one might say a talking picture book or a movie ... whose words are spoken in scenes ... over loudspeakers ... on tv ... in bed ... or during meetings ... addressing strangers on the street. The poet wakes up alone and speaks ... this is not me ... I never speak before coffee ... I growl or weep.

The poet greets ... or is greeted by ... Zimmer. Zimmer is an angle of the room ... a woman's voice (often singing or screaming) ... a lover's hand (where he deserves it most) ... a friend's reassuring image of him ... a French meal ... dark, intimate smells from his own body ... the womb of sentences. Zimmer, while never visible in its entirety, is present ... patient ... here to stay.

The poet is a harmless riot ... not a gentle idiot ... never straight. He is the casualty of a tone of voice ... which changes ... from day to day. Each time we hear the poet ... from act to act ... a tone of voice (or rather sentence) has changed ... not the poet's tone ... but the tone of his name. A new address ... which may be polite ... or angry ... or nonsensical ... tones of adoration ... of pity ... of disgust ... an hourly melodrama for the sane.

The poet is act by act subject to this new tone ... though not quite completely subjected ... as are Zimmer ... and the

room's hourly Visitor ... whose identity is never the same. The poet is an accidental subject to the tone of any given day ... he doubts it is he who is speaking ... though he accepts the new tone ... and plays his part with conviction ... almost completely convincing ... but not quite. The language is never quite right.

The daily visitors ... one per hour ... are truly characters ... in the sense of being so-called individuals ... who have come to visit the poet ... his niece for example ... a student ... a movie star ... a bureaucrat ... an artist ... a plumber ... a contemporary poet ... a producer ... a childhood friend ... and so on. They have come for a variety of different reasons. For our purposes it should be enough to know that visiting the poet is — as judged by society — a noteworthy event.

Unwittingly ... for the most part ... the visitors are accidental subjects to the poet's desire ... unconscious at first ... to steal a body of experience ... by touching ... more and more consciously ... a part of the visitor's body. Most visits end shortly after a member of the visiting body has been touched. This desire becomes ... increasingly ... the subject matter of conversation between Zimmer and the poet.

All representation ends when Zimmer and the poet greet each other in the same sentence ... whose tone is a monstrous collection ... which produces a Reader. Zimmer ... with body ... opens the door. All ungrateful visitors must ... with patience ... wait their turn ... and turn the page.

ROD SMITH

XCII (CINDER-SIFTER)

Heigho, says Anthony Rowley
 hedgehog

But a hedgehog in a pin-cushion
 the one, I hear, to nurse
 in ten you have three

A Hill full — a hole full
All begins with A
 fill the hall, nobody

"Indeed I have not any"
 in its flower, and ignorance

About the bush, my moppet
I'll meet thee alive.
 As the fish

Is fair and wise and good and gay
 as simplicity scattered became

I'll go to Newcastle
 to be filled wish Oh!
 like a valley to melt

And a child is born on the Sabbath day
 "Hoogh," quoth he.

"Honey," quoth she
 (in an)
 ... bamboo slips

& went his way in other men's ditches
 gradually a valley obscure

Put your finger in your eye
 holy inner latter

Sing holly, go whistle, and ivy
 The difficulty of
 treasures
 heart the latter tastes

Sing ivy, sing ivy
In Fife and his wife
 nature is exactly abstruse

I do not know and I do not care
Seven as six close five who four.

I alone confused.
 My father left me three acres of land
 They walked on their feet
 the multitude, smart multitude
 Sing ivy
 does not quieting smile
 A hundred eyes, and never a nose
 in its movements chooses time
 Noddle merry with merry merry with
 head. in the bottom spiritual
 And a child is born on Sabbath day
 bright bright I
 In his hand each land — and feet
 Is fair of face, and giving
 To help them Heaven death
 Here we go up, up, up,
 Thumpaty, thumpaty, thumb!
 Extreme fondness surely wastes
 Rain in under the dark
 crooked seems its summons
 “Will you have any more?”
 “My eyes are too sore.”
 Frumpaty, frumpaty, frump!
 there is none his mouth
 Is telling his beads
 the common sin Motion
 Among the green weeds
 he blunts
 he shuts
 Can I get there by candle-light? —
 with non-diplomacy
 To see the Parliament soldiers pass
 horses race curbs
 Get you gone, with a round body, what's that?
 war clumsy
 contentment
 Left in a wood, and there a prod
 inclining tone
 [one's] person only limits desire
 But Ringman cannot dance alone
 voice
 Hide, horn and all
 only the after
 Shall have a little bit.

No lark as blithe as he.
— everlasting end —
of the body
And sow will I have mine
the eternal stupid
saved his mouth affairs
I took the marrow-bone, and beat about his head
historian
on New Year's Day in the morning.
And when they got home shared the booty together
gaudy colors to carry sharp words
“Then pounce, pounce,” says every one
a gem to be let down
“She's down, she's down” says every one
reason's motion is reason's function
the low foundation
And the jackass's load
we honor the left
Cuckoo, cuckoo
in unpropitious affairs
But John Ball shot them all
the assistant the evasive the reverting
Their wings are cut
What I've got, you have not
it stands and changes
imaging its limits
& singing such a funny song
name but different
because they live among soldiers
Tommy laughed, and found his face
Blowsey boys, bubble O
The tiger of a growth
A hill full — a hole full
is scanty easily scattered
All of a row
while they exist
They think that I'm gone mad
That mind is at rest
contentment despised
Sing holly, go whistle, and ivy
most tender surely
itself to intend them
the world's model, the eternal returns

For you never shut your eye
 glory does not injure doing
As the day lengthens,
So the cold strengthens.
Sing ivy, sing ivy
 [Who] knows

SUSAN SMITH NASH

HOLLYWOOD BABYLON: MARILYN BROKEN SO NAME OF FAME

Graze my hips, brilliant like Henri Rousseau,
Technicolor beneath a full moon & an inquiring lion;
artifice mistaken for primitive; I work danger
into subtext; rupture psychoanalytic paradigms
with a thousand rhinestones refracting light like mirrors —
photograph my syntax; locate my idiolect of flesh
but crop out the clutter of referent — I am timeless,
a dream magnified 400x, in burnt-orange in dark tidal pools
you see close-up of my self-reification; presuppose orphan,
presuppose victim, presuppose sad, but mask my will-to-power —
through your lens my face you see a child embroidering
w/silken threads & clean white linen — an alphabet cross-
stitched azure & carmine — the name claiming immortal —
a marquee blazing fame in droplets of red on white —
you must name the shroud you will inscribe for yourself;
I pencil my brows, line my eyes & lips, my mask my art —
this town of *techne* drapes hope in neon & billboards,
success in a pool of blood & siren wailing at dawn.

NILE SOUTHERN

ART WAR

Ah, the ides of the Eighties, what a time!
She, an aerial-vocalist, and I, a Mantis-Man.
Her voice pitched somersaults in Milano cascade-riffs divine,
while I pranced, Mantis-danced, my trenchant angles all atingle.

The revolutionary climate began, with our public passions, our monthly weddings; wherein certain key image-occurrences were peppered amidst the playful idea that our friends would simply *be there*, and take part. The deerslayings, drag-queen pastors, film-loop lullabies, or the recurrence of high-heeled pomp, unsheathing into crimson-rabid-love scenes, always defied narrative or journalistic recapitulation. Stupefied for days afterwards, a critic from *The Times* was recorded muttering the following:

"sky-blue lace, smears into golden-sweated fur ... white streaks ... lost, and laughing. Tongue-flicks-licks, in hot-tipped wonder. Steel cage wall snaps shut. LIGHT GRAFT!! LOOK OUT! ... Stumps everywhere ... arghhh ... awful."

She and I were surprised, on occasion, by unscripted changes in the mise-en-scene, but only in the way that a light snow flurry comes as a pleasant to the seasoned traveller of Kodiak. Never were we engulfed by blizzards of uncharted bliss, or blisters for that matter, that is, not until the Art War came to be.

It was the flip-city arc of limbs atumble, the motion of the bodies themselves, which proved most effectively striking. Ricochetting soft off a windshield, wrist slapping madly on the curb, body bopping soundly against the blacktop, the milk container explodes in a Jackson Pollack rocket-crash on the blackened gravesite, providing the curious with fifty-feet of frenzied demarcation. Nearby, say, at The Winebar, a Windowsmasher strolls through the half-inch, his concealed armor of found objects barely protective, during this, the second, and most shocking phase of his penetration: the shards of smokey, bluegreen transience tinkle down fast, all eyes; horrific/narrow, fix on the trembling jags.

Luck was often with these antic-bete-noires, but no matter what the outcome, she and I called it Performance, Destiny, Artwar, Revolution. Often motivated solely by despair, our juggernauts most dynamic were those closest to the brink. Most unlucky were the 'heavy-metal-nickers' who bowed their heads, David Bowie *Heroes*-style, towards an oncoming bus or train, the heavy metal 'nicking' their foreheads, spinning them into lobotomized bliss. Our silent media superstars, and most curious spokesmen, were the rave of the press.

She and I had supplanted the more meticulous and socially capable members of our group into the most respected art galleries of SoHo. During odd hours they closed up shop and rigged the place (and the pieces) with explosives; each charge encased by oil paints, feathers, agent-orange derivatives, and day-glow acrylics. Nitrous-oxide tanks were secured, and opened, within the ventilation systems.

On Spring Sunday, the day of The Art War, these obscure, sleepy works of immense size and value were suddenly alive with eye-popping surprise. That which was once banal was now a challenge to one's very being! That once 'difficult', "impossible!"

Ours was an opening to end all openings. Doors too thick to smash, were unbolted. The nitrous was kicking-in at last, and now this ambient-arthouse was a rattling, ziplocked matrix of disaster. Our devious gallery-plants were prancing about, Mantis-like, as if their minds of feigned lackadaisy had suddenly snapped. Soon, gallery patrons joined in as well, some of them actually making insane sculptures out of the molten debris. For those who could not take it, the streets offered no relief, for they too were besieged by all manner of weirdness. Unplugged and sealed for months, refrigerators full of food and roaches were sprung open, exposing their hideous contents to all. Bathtubs were chained to street corners, filled with art, garbage, chemicals, and wax, then set aflame. Rusted barbed wire, primitively electrified by car batteries, zig-zagged across sidewalks, rendering thoroughfare more an abstract problem than a practicality.

Our 2,000 watt sound system, embedded in glass and cement on top of Mary Poons, was further protected by seven half buried Chris Burden disciples all concentrating on their breathing, and the dangerous scene they were a part of: the scattered black and blue shotgun shells, the oil candles burning everywhere, and the twelve tall gas-filled glass cylinders, each one only inches away from the Burden-ites. For twenty-four hours, South of Houston and West of Broadway was simply called "the Zone". Pedestrians feared our Ultra-sound, and vehicles dreaded the continual

plummeting of our odious, slaughterhouse waste.

Our final ceremony took place, during this fruitful and most happy time, in the gallery itself, which had attracted a whole new breed of patrons equipped with masks, shovels, asbestos gloves, and Raid. The gallery was most elegant now, elegant in its marred white walls, dripping, bubbling works, smokey pestilence, and organic putrifact. I began to prance as she walked out the door with head held high, eyes straight towards the image-field ahead, her red-smoldering cape flashing black and white snakes, Majestic Warrior, prey lounging in some distant land, she lets it fall, hair tumbling, calves lithe, thigh moving, ass grooving, bush glowing, her breasts leap into her somersault through the smoke, her voice radiating rings like hot suns in the morning tide, her rising screech cries, smashing into the single blur of an exploding limousine. She saw it all.

The Queen is dead! My queen lies bleeding in the wretched, gut-strewn street! Never to fly again; limbs dumb and useless. Between the cold granite stones her blood flows freely, loose New York City earth drifts purposely with it collecting particles of green plastic, blue mold, and oils of unknown color.

Our parody against the onslaught of decaying, listless vision, had fulfilled its streamlined prophecy; the advertized gum-wrapper had chewed itself to death and taken my baby with it. I recalled those rare moments of intoxication we shared, when looking at something actually meant something to someone, not nothing to everyone, or everything in the world to the game-host; rich, hot, and famous enough to buy or sell it.

How could one buy those smiles that sang to us, those moments of divine delight; cascade-riffs over backhanded palms, God's gifts spun in majestic arcs of gladness, the beauty spilling-forth like the ebbing wonder of a bird's euphoric coo. Enough. It must end. For now, a moratorium, for I cannot carry-on. We have left our brief mark. Let it smoulder and fizzle-out.

As I walk down the airport artstrips of art and money, I think how she, in her carefree cavorting of labial precision, and in the resonant madness of her somersault-bliss, helped to blaze a temporary road, or at least a seasonal clearing, towards a future where The Masters could emerge again, and lay down their brilliance for us, those radiant strokes of angelhair genius, for those who had learned, yet again, for an instant, how to see.

JULIANA SPAHR

AFTER DISASTER

written out of Goya's *The Disasters of War*

1.

.
these words are written in a large book
a man who mimics a beast is their scribe

2.

.
A man carries his hat stretched out in front of him
a woman ladles soup
some eat a course grain
others eat nothing
some will gain strength, others will sicken

.
men will enter rooms, taking off their hats
women will sit to eat, the china clattering
a man outside will cry out in the street
a woman will beg

.
it comes to all, denies all
it is the same everywhere
an idea of merit or one of deserving
poses of a difficult nature
these frozen in statue:
a woman reaching for a man's cheek
a woman's uplifted breasts as she is dragged by her hair
a woman surprised by a sword
a woman's legs spread apart
a dead body mutilated as if to give further pain

.
this will be the only response possible

3.

.
an upraised arm dangles in a tree

.
this cry will remain unanswered, unacknowledged

4.

.
the act of hunger is eliminated by the i.v.
the height of the tree does not matter in the hanging
a man's leg presses down on the shoulder, the neck snaps
riots break out merely reinventing capitalism
bloods and crips sell sneakers together in the street
men wear suits to sell the images of men in alleys
this keeps people indoors
making fences, checking locks, training dogs
reinventing security
as the television news claims an unbiased opinion
people who believe in two sides go to vote
others leave
their children follow

.
the next place is the same

5.

.
some things are unspeakable
some are worse
eventually one will see nothing because one sees too much

.
a man desolute in the night announces a new order
a woman listens turns away

CATRINA STRANG

FROM *LOW FANCY*

Tempt us best
of jocund urgings;
our mood's gaudy with
love's juveniles.

Can't sick the ominous feel
that dulls sight audibly,
modulates an intrusive call.

Of lurid totter
I am more genially ardent;
all this newest, novice love is riven,
quoted peril.

Leg it lightly;
memory's an inquest
whose tonic cumbles ethics:
addled, ambulant, and glorious,
a becoming bonus.
I'd dispense *any* minimum,
and cite supine eras
to prime my dear hocks,
so, script, console us: "kiss, sit."
Dignity's done.

Christ's dice, it's true.
My dick can rarely, rarely care,
it's as caring as a nun's habit.
Ubiquitous.
It rants an unveiled script
whose visceral ply inveigles use:
"do more, come more" –
I'll roam, and bulge a fulminant leave.

CHRIS STROFFOLINO

A CLOSE SECOND

Someone who's lost more than she ever recouped
(though she gained more than one who's never lost)
Is talking to me, like a mirror even a midget has
To stoop to see his face in, the mirror I haven't
Unpacked yet. I call her you. Nothing's here but
The obvious, the oblivious. All the advice you give
Drives away like the taxi you told to follow the car
You thought I was in. It left without you, but I
Wasn't in the car either. Turns out I'm sitting
Aside of you in the balcony and we don't even know
We're having sex. Yes, I am astonished at all the
Free food that comes with my admittedly overpriced
Receipts, like a woman who runs fast enough to make
Me want to catch her so much I will. But these ideas
Hold no water unless it's been changed to wine and
Can't be doggybagged without losing their flavor
Unless they also lose their nutritional value.

The underlying beat is fixed in the mind. The abrupt
Breaks and breathless run-ons seem to echo the feelings
They convey. Tell me I'm richer than I know, and I'll
Take a loan out to repay you by uncoiling a long
Extension cord to place a watercooler by a brook.
But you won't believe me unless you know there's
Something I won't allow; I must find it, to stop
Living the dream I won't believe you've woken from
Until you trade him in for me. If it's too early
To say I love you before, odds are it'll be too late
To say so afterwards. I run into you like the Colorado
River runs into the Gulf of California. I'm so nervous
My exclamation points look like question marks.
Eventually, I'll free desire from the kennels in hopes
It will know when to stop, in hopes that most men who
Mug you didn't learn how to do so in jail.

Why should you love me, when I've gotten by with
Only loving myself for so long now (since breakfast
at least) that the empty vessel corroded to seem full?
You wouldn't fare much better in these circumstances
(though you probably wouldn't let yourself *get* in
these circumstances). Admittedly torn, I tell the dog
(whose bark's no worse than a tree's) not to run over
And lick you, though you'd probably pet it, dropping
Your groceries, which it would eat to save me enough
Money to move out of the red if not the mind.

My friends make it sound like we're all at the
Heart's mercy, that the mind must sit and wait
At the redlight the heart is until it turns green
(as a dollar that opens all kinds of doors, a
master key). But what if it never turns green (as
a finger after a ring's been taken off it)? What if
The heart won't give orders, return the mind's serve,
but is too busy off with some other guy who, though
Making more money than me, isn't necessarily any
Less sensitive? Will I then have to offer no apology
But a theodicy, speak only in neologisms and clichés
And lay my lie on the line so that the absences
Sensations can't help but point to are as much out
Of the price range of the rich as of the poor?
Or will desire phone me the second you
Ring my bell to procure the much needed extended
Dance-mix of the mood so we wake up sore enough
Tomorrow to suspect we've lived . . .

GARY SULLIVAN

OF COURSE, CERTAIN COMPROMISES WILL HAVE TO BE MADE

Categories are not binding realities. Talking is What we call it, talking, because that's what it Is, the people talking. What excites us is how Real it is. We crashed the gate and went storming up the hill. The sun had disappeared & the Screen of the empathy box showed rushing Streams of bright formless color. As the Vice President's hand sank into my throat, I felt the .38 buck once in my fist and a small, bluish dot Centered in the middle of his forehead, bursting Its brain box. I leaned back against the cushions & stared at the ceiling. "I was there," I said. I Mounted the air again.

Exquisite sensibility is a Vertical myth. Long plumes of steam flared From the jabbering pistons. That night, in my Room, I woke up with some "presence" sitting On my chest, apparently trying to take over my Mind & body. I created the conditions that were Suitable for the invasion of life and life took Advantage of me. Each one of those hairs turned white. The phone rang and a voice came Sputtering through the receiver all over the Room.

There are men & women in this country. What makes them so miserable is the feeling that There is little they can do about this. Far above Them a steel sky fitted with windows let on to Nothing. Anonymity is such that in order to Sustain it, it calls for the dignity of a name. I Assumed that the capsules in this bottle were, as In the previous bottle, one hundred milligrams; However, these were time release capsules & Each contained not one hundred milligrams but Five hundred. Legs cycling happily, I touched The starter & the engine caught with a roar. There was no sound.

The apparency of authority
 Is authority. Reduced to impotent silence, I
 Gazed sightlessly at El Camino Real and the
 Streams of cars moving down the peninsula. A
 Heavy oval truck moved along the highway, the
 Radio blaring. "Abolish radios," it said. The
 World's layer of atmosphere swept out of exist-
 ence. The image wavered; dark waves of light
 Radiated menacingly &, as the congressional
 Body descended to deliver the judgment, I
 Reached behind me for the table lamp &
 Knocked it cold. Funnels hissed and shuddered,
 Spumes of steam spurted from the pistons &
 Driving gear. FDR spun his wheelchair, and the
 Entire Presidential contingent moved off at a
 Confident stride across the floor of the con-
 Vention center. Floodlights hit them in a silver
 Blast: "What are you doing in front of decent
 People?"

Living is the absence of life as it is
 Lived. The dim outlines of the real world wa-
 Vered and ebbbed, visible behind a wall of distor-
 Tion. Who is the person stretched out among the
 Littered ruin, half buried by torn-up pavement &
 Chunks of ash? What sort of song lies in a heap
 Near the door?

COLE SWENSEN

PROPHECY

For seven minutes the moon has a mane. I've been told
it's to be a decade of eclipses. Aerial drill for a well in space

Wound. Shell twirling down until the deep heart
struck. Stairway of the inner ear now that far

striking of a clock

The shape in the glass hallways onward she
adjusted her hat. "What is that I hear, that

I hear there's a storm coming in off the sea
the old lady across the street drawing her shades

That and the stray papers gathered in congregations in the
gutters a peaceful moment in full view of the sun

And the papers held on trains in hands in a single hand
while the other reaches up to adjust the light.

SIGHTINGS

Sound tonight that rain like marching one or two
days out they found the first traces

Walking on the warm dark. Rhythm that disturbs the rhythm of
the heart

Trees friendlier now great animals shifting their weight against
a storm rising, the power of grey

Across the street the organist replaces his body with music

Dozens of horses dozed in blacks, the sky choking on the
beautiful this cannot
be
air

When you color it in the risen

body of weather trade for your skin

WINDOW

Dozens of worlds, the weight that she

with arms overloaded, see we can fly I made
you a promise a marble life out past the fields
where the numbers shift

restlessly their breaths standing out one to each other

The coming of what outlined against a background we

innumerable sign faltered their singing which
will wake you unready

a rhythm that walker continues inside

into none but motion like characters in dreams
objects in pockets becoming slowly

thought beyond boundaries: voices, crowds, whole
crowds, voiced lives

ROBERTO TEJADA

FEDERAL DISTRICT

for N. & D.

Counterfeit angel
of whose independence

this wind, this vertical
rubbish to go

the reckless
velocity of the social

— the insurgent thoroughfare
only narrowly

endured without some
pale refreshment

& this pillow dribbled
with a civic indifference

FOURTH LASSITUDE

for Alberto and Magui

There is nothing habitual but travel.

Hurriedly, before the proper conditions
and the flora of distant promise
had burgeoned
'where the villagers
in the past
had abandoned
their ageing mothers
among the rocks'

A form of sorts. A nightly dismantled
departure. An appetite sluggishly
curbed, whose body,
while in probable
transit, was
nonetheless
bound to the same,
inescapable place.

I thought of pillars and provisions.

A RATTLE

for Alicia Rynne

Sing no less loudly
whose canto were

intimate or outraged

— the perfect building
from which you exit

w/ eyes closed. You:

the strange last star
of daybreak, over

this morning's meadow

whose black aristas
were tinged w/ orange

ices, as if a house

to one's fire — whose
anger is a porcupine

TESSITORE

[THAT GORGEOUS WOMAN, THE ONE]

That gorgeous woman, the one
called *Wolf*, has come
forward it was you, Tessitore –
named her, presumably
for the way she overcame you
one day on the town
square, took you home
and tore you bare
with her good teeth,
for her *savagery*
in bed, and for her
panting and ever-present
tongue.

Oh she denies
none of it, but claims
you haunt the shadows
beneath her window
and cry her name.

[MANY BELIEVE TESSITORE]

Many believe Tessitore
the neighborhood whore,
who reputedly receives
as many lovers as letters
— men and women alike —

in twos and threes
as naturally as one.

From the alley the children
keep count, playing out
the few scenarios they know,
or imagine, or saw
on television.

At last tally — twenty
in a week!

The couple in the one-
bedroom across the street
said their boy said
thirty made it behind
his red curtains.

He wagered his small
allowance on that count,

and doubled it!

[TESSITORE! – ONE OF YOUR RECENT BONES]

Tessitore! – one of your recent bones,
pretty with a small mouth,
has come up to report that
when she took your prick
to her tongue you grabbed her
by the hair and took over,
pounding her again and again
and she could not move.
This! after you told her
you had always wanted her,
loved her, but said nothing,
because you felt small.
So now she calls you, among
other things, *dog*, like many
in the town who for a long
time have watched you drag
from bar to bar any
drunken scrap of a woman.

LEE TEVEROW

HE CALLS THE FUTURE "FULL OF HOPE"

It is possible that a thinking person could be moved by the sight of a dress.
He defines a dress as a story.
Nothing intervenes between the garment and the body it is to clothe.
The interest in the form is not only technical but sexual.
It represents some quality of the bringer,
demands that all phases of human life be given up as fuel.
Pieces that are half-burnt depend on midnight, he says.
He'd like to go away for a long time simply to express the idea of the fire.
The robe covers his whole body down to the feet,
everything which has once been placed has to remain.
It is the tenderness with which the material is made to drape around his body
that elevates the night into proximity.

Phrases have been borrowed from the book of Leviticus and "*Fanfare in a Minor Key*," an article about fashion designer Yves St. Laurent by Holly Brubacher.

WHEN ONE PARTY ALLEGES "THIS IS IT"

When a fire is started and spreads to thorns
 you are no longer in the realm of unlimited choice.
 When you give goods for safekeeping,
 to be preserved like the pupil of an eye
 the doorposts might shake, the house fill with smoke.
 When men fight and one of them pushes a woman
 keep far from the mother's milk.
 When a man seduces a virgin he opens a pit
 and his feet are under him and under her.
 When a man gives to another
 he goes inside the cloud and ascends.
 If he fails her in these three ways
 release him on account of his eye.
 If he came single he goes without.
 If the sun has risen on him
 keep far from a false charge.
 If he marries another there are no lack of angels in heaven.
 An angel has six wings; with two he covers his face, with two he
 covers his legs, and with two he flies.

Phrases have been borrowed from the book of Isaiah and commentaries on the book of Leviticus by S.R. Hirsch.

WHEN YOU TAKE THE FIELD AGAINST YOUR ENEMY

Before every action there are words
to be spoken aloud. The sky gods,
a vertical metaphor for what we
do not grasp, divert the flow of a river
to cause distress. They appear as stomach-talkers,
ventriloquists, telling the future from monstrous births.
This is called "an objection to a story".
It causes a kind of short circuit,
like someone who can get along on corn
but insists on eating wheat.
It is the edge of the whole system
of existences divided by screens.
In that sense it is no fiction at all.

A point lies at the border. The homebuilder,
the farmer, the newlywed, the coward
follow in order of increasing anxiety.
They are the exceptions to the rule.
They live on an island in the middle
of the sea inhabited by birds.
Because we are dark-adapted, it seems
quite bright to us. This restores us
to a condition of guiltlessness. The birds
are considered as merely apparent, not real.

Phrases have been borrowed from *Seek My Face, Speak My Name*, by Arthur Green;
The Thirteen Petalled Rose, by Adin Steinsaltz; and commentaries on the book of
Deuteronomy by W. Gunther Plaut.

JOHN TRITICA

IMPROVISATION BEGINNING WITH A LINE BY ROSMARIE WALDROP

*I traced the law
of sufficient reason
down*

your spine
played calligraphy
that spells viscera
what food

I remember
that slumber
comes undone
a banquet spread
how

the tongue's fugue
doubles back
pitches

a sly jest
the curved neuron's
delicious response
a grace I paid

the patterns change
charge vertebrae in-
scribe

a novel
lesson screen
the angles distances
affect ascent
measure slant meridians

BILL TUTTLE

EPISTOLARY: TO AMELIA

stealing from the past to feed
the present. the melted trunk of a
nova lies in wait. tree by tree
falling over themselves three houses down

from the ice of your childhood. we'll get
together in late december when days
change. when lines gather in bread as early
as tomorrow and still I can't remember

the last time. the curve of your smile
grows in ocean miles. just that it's
been so long and the high sky hurts.
what you did i think of every day

it raises exponentially the level of
my possibilities. why do i
love you. the witches roamed cottage grove
and the church bells mirrored the marbled

incipient doves. the gutters open in
the streets. we sleep.

THURSDAY MORNING

do we breath and dream this
grey-green air. the sky is

old and wet. holds the lights
that words missing accumulates

what we have and will anticipate.
morning light bears down on us

will not let us choose to not
be moved. for this dream

means more than we ever would say.
trains depart ever more and what scalloped

environment will hold you tomorrow? surely
this sun will explode. not yet maybe

holds you today. we know a circle
might form by locking together our words

berries on a string. are you happy
living here? you would forget the earthen

boundaries, the ghostly drives, all
manner of inert gases, the one moment of violet

industry, and cruise the icy cirrus.
the next course begins when the sky is set

and we are lost to what passed
beyond beginning.

LIZ WALDNER

DESINIT IN PISCIM/A FISH TALE

Forget science. The children of frost
(*little matchgirl in transubstantiation — Jakob Boehme*)

are at home among the Japanese. A shallow land
(windowpane, counterpane)

is strange, just cause
(*Operation Clockwork Orange*).

Those snow
(*coked*) (*Blake's chimneysweep: O but my soul is white!*),

Pacific O
(*conquest, a popular thing to think about*).

Flag, civilization, grass skirt harvest.
(*Slash and Burn: serial killer is code for Rape and Torture women. The latest: rape rates up 59% this year. But not to worry; overall number "still RATHER SMALL"*)

Mine: NOblesse Oblige, DrOit de Seigneur, etc. Tariff. Wave.
(*WAV*)

flak Raft george Mote saint Beam male-mal-mail
(will not stray from appointed etc)
Draft blind/blond eye Ocean na(pal)m oven Omen.

Body
(water/land)

question.
(*Newton's. Niemans. Sci-fides. Well-sempered*)

A poet will regress the seasons
(*Jews born-again of smoke*);

chemistry as livelihood is an improvement
(*yet Primo Levi jumps*):

electricity and vinegar
(*through a straw*)
for dinner of an eve.

"I had lost my physicality." True progress forget soul
(*its transparent habit*)

"having a swallow like flight and insectivorous habits"
(*Metamorphosis, Ovoid and Kafkoid*)

the big gulp
(Lust belongs to the Egg);

upon examination
("PUR SI MUOVE": Galileo, sotto voce, on his knees before
Inquisitors, a game of dominoes) an Italian invention

we find evolution of the lazy and warm
(*O tempora! O mores!*)

to the level of the knee
(*O altitudo!*)

Information is French; they destroy the habit of the subject
(*the soul of dirt*)

its tongue its calm
(*mane tekel phares*)

its newspaper the pedestrian who doffs his hat. Wax candle
(*mehr licht mein gott*)

north garden
(*give lilies*)
the elements

the century is just possible, a fish climate for justice
(*You, sirrah, teach a fish to swim*),

scales awash. Sublata causa, tollitur effectus:

MARK WALLACE

STANDARD TIME

So the dark descends
earlier now and the watches
tell a tale of time
gone different for the winter and I
sit here, quiet
for the moment on the fringe
of hectic weather. There will be
invitations to the houses
of friends for dinner and the strange
sauce of what remains unknown
in behaviors and the soup
of the ideas that warm
in the brains of everyone.
And I will say again
let it come through to me.
There is nothing to know
inside ourselves, I think,
and thinking it forms
these rooms and a few drops
of conversation and the rain and sun
which one can too
casually reject, or utter
in the language of misunderstanding
that multiplies like a maze –
what you or we, or who or he
will not tolerate, as if the sound
of any shouting could be followed
by silence. Everything happens
at least again and again when
one wishes it even
while denying that, so it becomes
easy to be some version
that packages in prearranged
boxes that soon have
everyone moving away. The city
is also on my hands

and when the rooftops stretch
towards the lake and my differing
desire turns me strongly in my moods
of the choice of who to be
I wonder if it was with us, ever,
to say much of the bewildering
streets of this stupendous dream
made real as glass on the curb
and the woman who wanders
in a bright green coat and stares in windows.
And so the genres
came to be in speaking
how someone would stand next to.
To change the scene was also a business
and who, in what way,
was the audience each word could talk to?
I could take a drive in the country
and watch the leaves and the houses
of other lives and get a phone call
that reminded me of pain
that I could suddenly feel in old
and useless patterns. How could you know
what would not be again.
Odd to feel these negotiations
as the measure of success.
I am happy as my hands.
This vision, if it's there in words,
is quiet, momentary, as the act
of making a sky
is as immediate as the burdens
that become so by avoiding them — it so
easily
can go each way.
Someone came to speak to me
and I tried to be home
to what I could hear of them.
It was about the air that way
or, instead, it was the air,
whatever leaned against
the greeting in the voice.
You went on from there
with the whole world in it
and all there was no way

to hold. I remember it
now, and make it
in a story again.
Tell us that one, someone said,
face pressed
against the windows of winter.
Tell us so we hear it, because
today it's dark so early.

CHARLES WEIGL

13 R FATHERS

Our fathom who articulates inborn hegemony
hallucinatory began your namesake
your kingly comfort
your wisdom become dormant
on echoes as they incline into history
gladden us those daybreaks our dainty
breaths
but form us our sinews
as we formulate those who sing behind us
leak us notably into tenacity
and delude us through evocation
from yours issues a kinsman
and a practice and a glossary
forgetfully but everywhere
amen

Our philosophy who conceives of jail
strong grows your figure
your penitentiary means
your world is hard
with knives as it teaches through people
call us good thought our responsible children
and blame us our humans
as we eat those who respect us
make us one of you
and put us in nowhere
for you sell the newspaper
and the opinion and the idea
back and before
amen

Our famines were arcs in helix
hateful by their needs
that kidney cold
that wild bore down
on each as it intended in hunger
grace us through death our dated breath
and forge us our trellises
as welcome flames that tongue always upward
lower us neatly into signposts
but devour us for explanation
for you are the knuckle
and the purpose and the gutter
frozen and enviable
amen

Our sense who abolishes labor
marching understands your time
your exploitation lives
your economy evolves legal
into capital as it mitigates communication
transfer us new soil this needed factory
and produce us our existence
as we consume those who preach against us
name us undesirable on railways
but represent us to society
for yours is the established
and the civilized and the unrealizable
forward and necessary
amen

Our god who trembles in turn
weak is your gate
your powers wear
your country was rendered
into things as it seemed upon knowledge
bear us ill friends our great youth
and pass us our family
as we write those who watch for us
wrap us before in reasons
and lay us on flocks
of yours began the victim
and the epidemic and the beggar
exactly and somewhere
amen

Our mistress who revolves around concrete
 real are your mysteries
 your velvet walks
 your stiletto is withering
 to wolves as they dig in dirt
 place us round knees our nervous sweat
 but face us our humiliation
 as we strip those who lick behind us
 grovel us black in dismay
 and crawl us our bellies
 from you extends the toe
 and the heel and the leather
 convulsive and reeling
 amen

Our century who calls from cybernetics
 control lurks your essence
 your culture looks
 your world combines infatuation
 with tools as they disdain their uses
 hack us broad word our tough computer
 and cover us our music
 as we boil those who sprout among us
 describe us unholy with technology
 and write us in science
 for you make the fiction
 and the future and the fusion
 clandestine and certainly
 amen

Our april who is in lilacs
 dead mixes your memory
 your desire rains
 your winter kept covering
 with snow as it fed into tubers
 surprise us sunlit hour our frightened night
 and clutch us our branches
 as we beat those who are under us
 sing us more than fading
 but speak us into silence
 to you is the merchant
 and the cold and the wicked
 here and which
 amen

Our words who pursue through rulers
compelling laughs your democracy
your imagination halts
your police are polite
to temptation as it gives into fog
order us unopened light our doubled anguish
and pass us our law
while we remember those who commit to us
believe us often in theory
but pronounce us on tyrants
toward you rises the animal
and the angel and the praise
eternal and everlasting
amen

Our road who ran through graveyards
righteous raise your war
your door completes
your moment holds fear
in circle as it denies the wheel
feel us sleeping dragon our dreaming prey
and wait us our death
as we take those who scuffle down us
control us ingrown around night
and burn us on machines
in you moves the fire
and th air and the home
over and over
amen

Our justice who begins with infliction
condemned speaks your man
your swindle enjoy
your respect know financial
of design as it takes the last penny
save us poor haul this retiring fortune
and rob us our place
as we acquire those who thirst beside us
regard us unskillful in transaction
and dwell in our favors
on you shines the cent
and the slave and the pearl
reduced and engulfed
amen

Our power who is of legions
stricken feel your fluids
your body tempts
your breath moves subtle
in blood as it races from veins
open us watchful gate our rising sun
and close us our time
as we seal those who know of us
govern us first to chaos
and call us in magic
in you is the sea
and the name and the number
away and ever
amen

Our children who kill in love
different have been your names
your number was
your cell is whoever
with fiends as they want on the inside
reflect us this smile our only love
and give us our battlefield
where we want those who go by us
build us lonely before allegiance
and trap us in truth
because yours was the father
and the system and the self
forever and ever
amen

SUSAN WHEELER

JOURNAL OF THE THOUSAND CHOICES

I Dinner

So that's what you've got in your back pocket.
Come over here. And when she moves to her left
the Missouri courthouse behind her looms into view until
you are distracted by her collar, alive as it seems.

II Job

The acacia at the bayou bloomed a thousand times,
a thousand times. A small librarian
born to better things sang I see the moon and the moon
sees me. The townspeople, caught off guard, watched
the lobe suspiciously. The tower tolled a dozen chimes –
it tolled for thee.

III Relations

She wanted burgers but before they had even hit the grill
a police car pulled up in front of the restaurant and two
cops bolted in with fire arms out.

IV City & State of Origin

Land in malachite, eyeball the sediment, stratify the
limonite. What breather breaks the chert, the flint?
What arrow bursts obsidian? I have a dollar bub
the pyrite rains round here like gold.

V Canned Goods

Lassia found her skating and skating around
the Tyrolean pond in circles. Herr Settembrini
had but just left her,
and Lassia became shy at her new ruddiness.
The words alarmed at the larynx,
the steam of the blade on the ice,
the rise of the fruit at her chest,
the falling of water, the roar.

Here, unwrap the cigar and cut it like so.

VI School

Chateaubriand this, chateaubriand that.
Like pekinese sniffing at table,
Mr. Lewis and his electric organ spun
the stuff of a thousand halls.

CHET WIENER

WHO DOESN'T

#3, sounds, and the light dims
Clouds, and the cars
Memory on population
The harrowing, doing
What someone else
Thinking
And the line
The correspondence
The lurch off
When
Because there's no
Holding
What is and
Which repetition
Positioning incline
Being pleasant
And another train
Glasses and the light
Hitting
Flicker as hard
Weight
Feet, temperature
Building remains
The mouth and the hand
Waving, of course
Coughing as memory
In the company of
Call it awful
A wonder
Blissful
A color
Later and I . . .

Add
An ingredient
In a face

Penchants
Getting smaller
That kind of focus
If time stopped
You were to see
On sensation
What making it
About other thoughts
Easier and yet
That much desire
The thing about you
And it seems that much clearer
Aren't you
And in the midst
Still going
But or not
Wanting to measure

Break to weather
Delusions
Back on why
And the always
Continue
Now fear
What behind what
Whether
What aren't you
What is wrong

ELIZABETH WILLIS

FROM *SONGS FOR A.*

to spell and to measure

the pears

I (shadow purchase) I

step-across landowner

(cold in time)

break or speak so

(w/o is outside)

•

in the world *C* mothers *said*

(chimera

“yet there is no light”)

opaque and alter the E

northing and easting *against*

stones that a pleasing separation

perpendicular Night also in the day

occurring–night all the time *to conceive*

so grave an exit and laughter

itself containing that the place is

mutual

It–meridian housed in the sea

•

so to fall open
 little by little savor
 strange mother Xian
 (the teacup position)
Medea flying the limit
 birdlime—I never so
 (knew it)
 eyebeam where
 she came through
 I knew it

•

Once / the hard gullet
 (I her issue)
 so small and so swallow
She though approximate

•

2-handed remorse in the dying me
 romancer the dying me
 the millionth other to the millionth
 otherwise I was fallen
 bootstrap figurehead I was loving you

•

when I say you
is that you
the woman or the crime
I forget

& when I say you
is that you

I was about to be a syllable
I was about to fall glorious

•

great—one cud over & over I
erudite (Worthless)

removed (& so burning) that
love-government labyrinth
Latin-angel my heart
I grow to love this screen

•

authority-summit our mother
when my heart had ears

that tender fortune
when a low place carries love

KATIE YATES

1.

Dark far thought Clasps Daisy root in response to terror of
terror unseen alone & not habitual how to build Wither drowsy
from the outset seen of night. thought Terror built of child
structure such as the purpose: to do. The children learn that
sorrow that mathematics of utter generality and common
knowledge e.g. lyric vocabulary of “perishability” that one
carries far. Hither. Drowsy. Not repeatable, World falsehood.
I do not believe – having explored the question e.g. breakdown
the structure terror of earth end unseen. Just Night Vigil. Such
as ones singular. End unseen. In the rhyme of how one must live
the first question alone in the shelter of bees. This may be the
time. Where she addresses world deeply at odds in a letter to
Andrew. Susan West. Pattern in sleep. Not repeatable. One
learns falsehood, knowledge, massacre blind. DESTINY. Is
practically nil. Is talent & frenzy. formal catastrophe. Menacing
question. Rhyme or their anarchist forms. Or moral thought.
This may be the Time for the perishability of ancient beauty, of
Nature. Formal memory. Nil purpose to Ancient Beauty. Flint.
Intact fury. Is literacy. Carrying a banner of Truth in the pattern
of History.

What do you know asleep? Am welcome drifting to operate
mystery computers. Pierce how to live as a bride Oh welcome
repetition of requirements of my Seagray

2.

Carved out of a monotheistic god.

 Welcome

 O

 distant sorcerer

 dim 99°C miracle or

hissing together bent on itself, bent
to the Northwind bent to where she
turns into seagray phase shift perhaps
cancerous obedience shall approach
love eros even more hissing

pausing to repress and countless father
can sacrifice northwind proud
secrets hissing to gather
loneliness
asleep
in exploitation
“how to die” how together?
how lyric how manifest
how poison how hid how to access
knowledge in this desire to land
mobile compensation
gesture of the jongleur
to expound
or are we just speaking
in High Middle habits
this having to run home
this afternoon
this squall the whole idea
of another genius be/side
you managing to hold night
pastures seem hostile to
occupy their dichotomies
as the proper ambition is to sit
hour out – The Rules of the Disciple
even the murmuria for her sake &
others for life itself deemed
balanced the species ego wheat
straws out of so awkward to love
faceStone face reaching into it
trying to pull apart the efficacy

3.

So knell to their own ends
drowned dust prospective attached
to conventionality. On the open
telling Self resurrection and Anti-self.

Such a comparison – alone and alone smile statue
was mostly double talk by academic wing flapping bright
ship Bright drown-ed ship. Mirror for Nature for sake her.

Studied, he showeth so much of my face Stone like
a woman accursed, accused in the Fall. Remembering attackers.
Keepeth us rebelling. Divide. Conventionally. Sun alighting
so awkward her sentence

Alone and haste to calme the Word. Lost work in
pastoral freedom and strawboy.

From all the evil. Old uneven sunbite.

Fair my head. "Exile." Like magic.

See the Nightingale. Lie no accident.

Vague revolt. Round the fire. Lie.

Elopement of hills. Himself to the object.

Going (sometime both) (mummer)

This experience of bed down the birds.

Ensnare & scatter the ravens. Shivering.

A gain into empty interior. Himself eaten by poet.

Creator. Downwoods. Held on to craft.

Vague north in one's mouth.

Three times is murder. Thrown.

Sometime indignant.

Scattering streams of written.

Traces. Of necessity. Woods. Never complete.

Nameless threshold. Nameless sleep.

Making of. Scatter. Records of Conquerors.

Inward. Of course a raw non-place. The pure signification.

Secret of half of my face. In excess of the technology
which depends upon the moral fathers. The watery ebb of pure
knowledge. Of high virtue itself. Shell. Fragment of Liquidation
introduce Aesthetics. A raw, beautiful case of Stella. No longer.
The humble Angel of proposed marriage. Attributed to beautiful
phrases. Exchanged. Frozen in the spiritual. Illegitimate. As for
Patrick's bird.

Travels

Will be k unable to fly after

Accurate. Yes. If he be willing.

The Most Fascinating freedom.

We study the murmuring. Skepticism.

Churchyard of criticism

Mouth of river

Famine wisdom.

Inlet task

Liberties unperceived. Language with treachery.

Aura.

Inlet system

measuring

KEVIN YOUNG

FROM *CORRESPONDENCE*

SERMON

Heaven has to be this
hot shady place where
folks drink from sky

where we *Preach*
now flood with the hint
of rain where no one

crosses *All right* rivers
of hounds & the thirsty
sip from wells full

of flowers & fallen men
where no man owns
anything or you or your

mama where some *Praise*
the Lord people starve some
don't but no body thins no

one else where it ain't all gold
harps but nothing swims
a slave *A-men*

BOSTON, MASS.

November 8, 1841

To the Hon. John Quincy Adams:

Most Respected Sir, — the Mendi people will never forget your defence of their rights before the Great

Court of Washington. They feel that they owe to you, in a large measure, their delivery from evil

hands. They will pray for you as long as you live Mr. Adams. They never forget you. We are about

to go home, to Africa, we reach Mendi very quick, then tell the people of your kindness. Good

missionary will go with us. We will take black Bibles in our mouths, — it has been a precious book

in prison, in writing you, in fire, and we love to read it now we are free. Mr. Adams we want

to make you a present of a beautiful Bible. Please accept it, and when you look

at it, remember your grateful clients. We read in this holy book: — *If it had not been the Lord*

upon our backs when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick. Blesséd

be the Lord, who has not given us a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird

out of the fowler's snare, — the snare is broken and we soar against the gate and airs of Heaven.

For the Mendi people,

CINQUE
KINNA
KALE

GENTLEMAN

at sea, near Sierra Leone

January 13, 1842

Dearest Tappan – this Captain good –
no touch Mende people. We have seen
great water – no danger fell upon
us. I tell you to make letters
for those who no touch us. All
Mende people glad for white men

you give to go with us. Mister
Steele – he left ship to find place. He stop
in Tucker's town – who drink rum all
the time – who is a drunkard. Who like
money better than his own soul. He
tell us the ground costs six hundred

bars – Steele would not give so much.
All the rest of Mende left ship to find
their parents. I think that they will
come again. If they no come, I think
God will punish them forever – one
day. You see we are ten now to stay

behind Steele, and three girls. We will
work wood, we will farm and cut
for him every day. You no feel
bad for that – dear friend – some
Mende men will take care
of your mission. Soon I catch

Sierra Leone – my country – make
home – and take care of white
man. Oh, dear Mister Tappan
how I feel for these wondrous
things! I cannot write so true
because the ship rolls. Pray –

Jesus will hear you – if I never
see you in this world – send word
from the next and the new –

GEORGE BROWN (Fu-li)

THAD ZIOLKOWSKI

FOUR POEMS

Dusk averages the
star a
model of clarity
drinks
and I know I speak
and that it is not whatever
the future holds

And while we swam we sang
Of Off and On
a song about swimming
were given one
thought to think and hung
a door where the bird flies
and makes two of us
and floats the sheetrock

What is clear is
this picture and there
is no object unless a tissue
of careful aim timed for slow
continual release
from its conditions of possibility
holding hands
at the four corners of the earth

Whose many works include
wherever no one or at most
rain despite intent shifting
people I remember seeing them tied
in colors when simply
to beat hurts the heart of a brief
life or difference
in mass

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